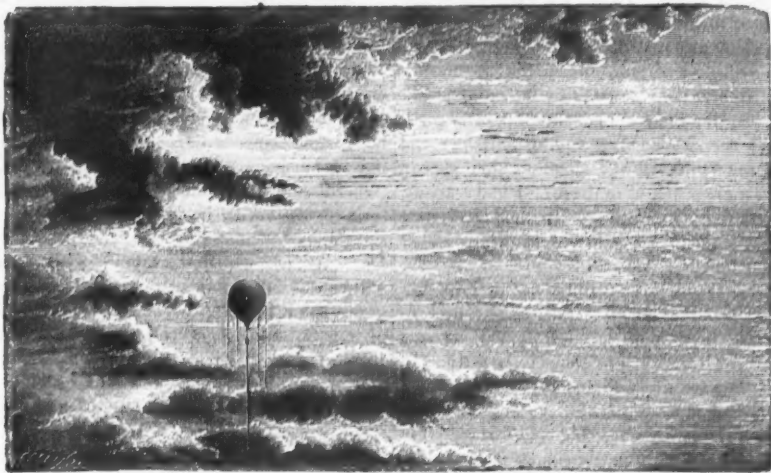


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CLOUD SCENERY.

FROM the work of Mr. Glaisher, the distinguished aéronaut, entitled, "Travels in the Air," we make an extract descriptive of the cloud effects witnessed by him in the upper air. The ascent to which he refers was made in August, 1862, from Wolverhampton, England. He says: "The spring-catch was pulled, when for a moment the balloon remained motionless, and then rose slowly and steadily. In about ten minutes we passed into a magnificent cumulus cloud, and emerged from it into a clear space, with a beautiful deep blue sky, dotted with cirri, leaving beneath us an exceedingly beautiful mass of cumulus clouds, displaying magnificent lights and shades. When at the height of twelve thousand feet, the valve was opened and we descended to a little above three thousand feet. The view became more glorious; very fine cumulus clouds were situated far below, and plains of clouds were visible to a great distance. Wolverhampton, beneath us, was sharply and well defined, appearing like a model. The clouds during this ascent were remarkable for their supreme beauty, presenting at times mountain scenes of endless variety and grandeur, and fine dome-like clouds dazzled and charmed the eye with

alternations and brilliant effects of light and shade.

* * * When at the height of twenty-four thousand feet a consultation took place as to the prudence of discharging more ballast, or retaining it to insure a safe descent; ultimately it was decided not to ascend, as some clouds, whose thickness we could not tell, had to be passed through. * * * A most remarkable view now presented itself; the sky was of a fine deep blue, dotted with cirri. The earth and its fields, where visible, appeared very beautiful indeed—here hidden by vast cumuli, and plains, and seas of cumulo-strata, causing the country beneath to be shaded for many hundreds of square miles; there, without a cloud to obscure the sun's rays. Again, in other places, there were detached cumuli, whose surfaces appeared connected by vast plains of hillocky clouds, and in the interstices the earth was visible, but partly obscured by haze or mist. In another place brightly-shining cumuli were observed, and seas of detached clouds, which cannot be described. Due north, a beautiful cloud appeared, the same we passed through on leaving Wolverhampton, and which had followed us on our way, still reigned in splendor, and might, from its grandeur, have been called the monarch of clouds. On looking over the top of the car, the horizon appeared to be on a level with the eye; the

image of the balloon and car, in descending, was very distinctly seen on the clouds."

After being in the cloud regions for about four hours, the *aéronaut* descended in safety, seven miles from the place of starting.

A most remarkable phenomena was witnessed by the celebrated French *aéronaut*, M. Fissander, in 1868, on the occasion of an ascent at Calais. It is thus described:

"We are already four thousand feet high, and the sea foams beneath our car. * * * But the splendor of the panorama which unrolls itself before our eyes is sufficient to dispel all sense of danger, and we scarcely dream of the rapidity with which we are being carried out to sea. To our left we perceive the town of Calais, like a city in miniature placed upon a lilliputian shore; we distinctly see the jetties of the port, and a crowd of microscopic spectators running along them like a family of ants. At our feet the transparent sea, like a vast field of emerald, brilliantly lit up by the solar rays. Looking upwards towards the sky, we see violet-colored clouds, which appear suspended at a great height in the air. I had scarcely taken my eyes from the clouds, when we perceived a very unexpected phenomenon of mirage, which added to our astonishment. We turned to look for the coast of England, but it was hidden by an immense veil of leaden-colored cloud. Raising our eyes to discover where this cloud-wall terminated, we saw above it a greenish layer like that of the surface of the sea, and soon we descried upon it a little black point the size of a walnut-shell. Fixing our eyes upon it intently, this little, moving spot turned out to be a ship sailing upside down upon an ocean in the sky. In a few moments a steamer made its appearance; it was the image of the boat from Calais to Dover, and by the aid of a telescope I could distinguish the smoke coming out of the funnel. Then two or three other vessels came upon the scene, and added to the wonders of this magic sea projected into the air by a fantastic effect of mirage."

GRAMMAR AND CONVERSATION.

"I WAS so much struck a short time since," said a friend with whom I was taking a stroll, "with the remark of a talented young authoress on the subject of grammar. 'It is not a lifeless study,' says she. 'The moods are the expressions of human nature in its different phases. The indicative is the language of fact which declares or denies; the imperative, of feeling which commands, entreats or warms; while the subjunctive is the favorite utterance of the imagination, which hopes, fancies or dreams what may be or what might have been.'"

"The very term verb," said I, "is full of endless suggestiveness. It is derived, as you know, from the Latin, and means word, or *the word*; and thus, by its title, it assumes the fact that it is *the word*; that is, the significant and important word of all language. A verb which denotes 'to do, to be or to suffer,' is

indeed *the word* of all language, as doing, being and suffering are the sum of all life."

"Yes," said my friend. "In this point, grammar seems to have something positively human in it. The title and position of the verb are not idle nor arbitrary, but spring from 'the eternal fitness of things.'"

"Then there is the substantive," said I, "which stands side by side with the verb in importance, the two being to language what the heart and lungs are to the human body. 'Substantive' is equally as suggestive a term as 'verb,' when we come to analyze it, being derived from the same root as substance, and expressing essentially the same idea."

"There is one rule in grammar that strikingly reflects a principle in human nature," said my friend. "'The verb must agree with its nominative case.' There must be a congruity between a person and his acts. When any one is overruled by the persuasions of others, or by any extraneous motive, to take a step not in accordance with his own judgment and wishes, not in harmony with all his foregoing life, there is something of the same discrepancy as when a verb fails to agree with its nominative case, as would be the case, for instance, if one were to say, 'I is,' or 'he am.' An act which does not spring from a root within the soil of our own nature, has no vitality, no grace, about it. Acts performed from the persuasion of others, from fear, self-interest or any outside pressure, are like boughs or flowers gathered from afar and stuck into the surface of the soil. Having no root underneath, they look stiff and clumsy, and quickly become wilted. By all means, let the verb agree with its nominative case, in real life as well as in grammar."

"In the course of my life," said I, "a good many instances have fallen under my notice of the jarring effect produced by the verb's failing to agree with its nominative. I have not infrequently seen persons repressing their own bent and trying to play some rôle for which nature had not designed them, and the effect is always painfully jarring."

"It seems to me," said my friend, "that, amid the multiplicity of branches now taught, English grammar (especially in its higher branches of syntax and prosody) does not meet with the attention it deserves. Comparatively few persons attain to a thorough knowledge and mastery of it. You may find a flaw in the diction of nine persons out of ten whom you meet."

"I notice in particular," said I, "a flaw in the manner in which most persons apply adjectives—a part of speech capable of adding a charming finish to language when properly employed, for an adjective holds the same relation to a noun that trimming does to a dress, and when this word trimming is suitable to the subject, it adds as beautiful and effective a finish as fringe, lace or embroidery adds to a dress; but adjectives are used so indiscriminately by the majority of persons, that they disfigure rather than adorn language. Take, for instance, 'lovely,' which the young fashionables of the day apply to all sub-

jects, as impartially as Draco applied one punishment to all offences; or take such adjectives as 'glorious,' 'splendid' and 'awful,' which, though intended only to characterize high, and noble, and holy things, are constantly applied to trivial ones, like the sacred gold and silver vessels so lightly used by Nebuchadnezzar."

"It is strange," said my friend, "that the young people of the day who have such a nice eye for the proprieties of the toilet, should be so obtuse or so careless about the clothing in which they drape their ideas. There is often a grievous misfit in this clothing. There is an art and a science in dress which, when studied and followed, make it beautiful and becoming; and the same may be said, in a much higher degree, of language, which is the clothing of ideas."

"I was recently reading a biography of Keats, in which I met with a very striking thought on the power of words. 'There is a great deal more,' says the biographer, 'in the choice of words than is commonly supposed. The thought or feeling a thousand times repeated, becomes his at last who utters it best. This power of language is veiled in the old legends which make the invisible powers the servants of some word.'"

"Every one may learn to wield this power more or less," said my friend, "and thus acquire some degree of proficiency in what I consider the most beautiful of the fine arts—conversation. How plastic, how flexible it is! What a shifting play of tints gleam over it, as over the waves of the sea! How it recuperates the mind by its alternate giving and receiving! How full of vitality it is, and how delightfully it evokes vitality! Altogether, I consider conversation, in the true sense of the term, as the rarest product evolved by culture—its 'bright, consummate flower.'"

"Conversation is the only one of the fine arts," said I, "that may be enjoyed at almost any place or time, whenever and wherever you can find two thoughtful minds to evoke the spark from each other. Very few of us are painters, sculptors or musicians; nor do the majority of persons have frequent opportunities to even enjoy the artistic creations of others; but conversation is more subtle, more plastic, more rapid in embodying itself, more independent of surroundings and all extrinsic things, more in the reach of the masses; hence it is my favorite of all the fine arts."

"When we come to reflect on conversation," said my friend, "there is something wonderful in it—nay, almost magic. Its wand evokes, on the spur of the instant, pictures of stately beauty, of deep pathos, of sparkling mirth and wit. It draws its images from all realms of human thought or experience, from all that humanity has ever known or dreamed of. It literally has no limitations. No magician ever evoked images with more power and more rapidity than the man who is gifted at once with ideas and with words. When, by the power of language, lovely, stately visions are called up before my mind's eye, it

reminds me of the old myth of Apollo's lyre, under the influence of whose melody

'Ilium, like a mist, rose into towers.'

Beneath the spell of some great and beautiful theme I have known conversation called out that was so full of beauty and earnestness, so rich with fine and noble thoughts, that the city of Ilium springing up under the spell of Apollo's music, could not have filled me with more delight."

"You may depend upon it," said I, "that the materials for your conversational city of Ilium had long been carefully amassed, else the city could not spring into what appears to be an instantaneous existence. Thoughts and images, which, in the course of conversation, bloom out on the spur of the moment, spring from roots that have long been growing underground, and these roots have gained strength and vitality by pains and culture. Even with fine natural gifts, one does not learn to converse well without a broad and generous training; without study, culture, reflection and mingling with the high-toned and cultivated. It is not every one who can learn to converse finely and brilliantly, even with all these advantages, but even where the capacity is limited, where imagination and eloquence are lacking, a person may at least learn to speak the English language with purity and exactitude."

"It is impossible," said my friend, "to attain to any excellence in conversation without being trained to accuracy of thought and expression, otherwise there would always be something slipshod in the phraseology. As soon as a child's perceptive and reasoning faculties are awakened, it is well to begin training him to embody his little thoughts and fancies as accurately as he can. Make him aim to hit the word-target exactly, not to remain satisfied with approximating to it."

"Do you remember," said I, "the horror which the learned and intellectual St. Beuve expressed of what he called the '*à pen près*' (about or nearly)? There was an exquisite clearness and exactitude in his language, as well as the nicest accuracy in his knowledge of facts. These results may be traced, in a great measure, to his avoidance of the '*à pen près*' system, and no one can attain to a clear cut phraseology without shunning the ambiguity and looseness belonging to this system."

"I am so much of St. Beuve's way of thinking," said my friend, "that it positively pains me to hear any one employ a word that does not exactly fit the subject."

"I do not know of any study more deeply interesting than that of words," said I. "I love to trace them to their origin, to analyze them, to study their nice shades of meaning. I love, especially, to study the delicate and subtle distinctions between words, which, on first glance, appear to be synonyms."

"The fine grouping of words, the stately and harmonic progressions of language, yield me as exquisite a delight," said my friend, "as the grouping of notes and the harmonic progressions in music, in

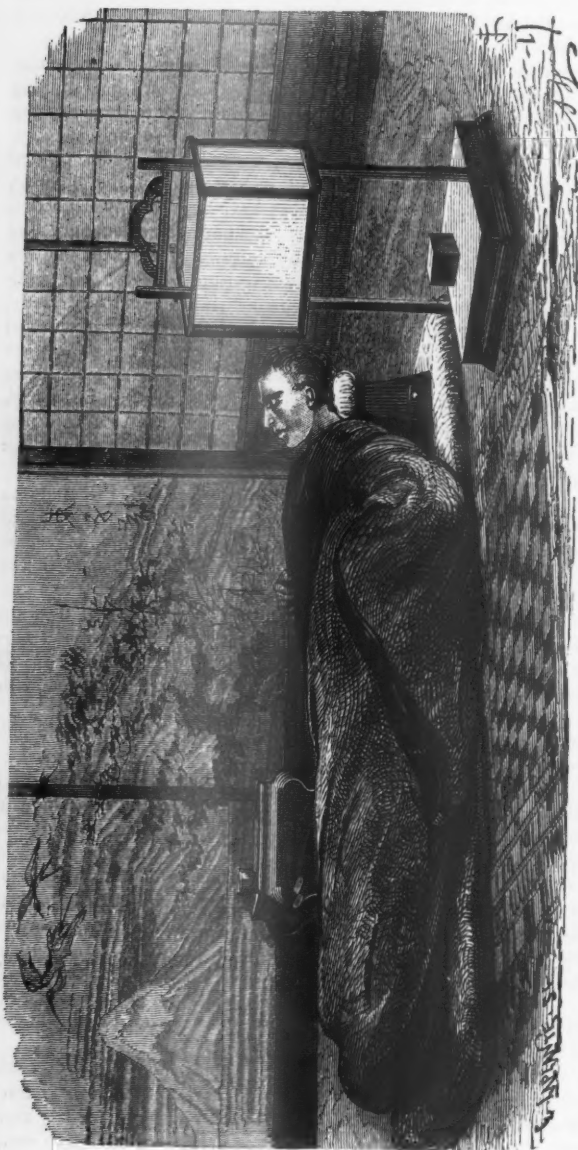
such writers, for instance, as Shakespeare, Milton, Tennyson, Dickens, Macaulay, and others, who wield as thorough a mastery over language as Paganini did over the violin, from which he drew such wondrous melodies. Indeed, the harp of Æolus itself is not more charming than language skillfully and appropriately used.

MRS. MARY W. EARLY.

ing arrangements of this people are very simple, requiring no extra rooms, the bed and sleeping apartments being improvised anywhere with large screens, a thin mattress of rice straw and a wooden pillow, with a hard cushion on the top covered with many sheets of paper. These sheets are turned or changed as they become soiled. This strange head-support, the

same, we are told, as that used by the ancient Egyptians, preserves an elaborate coiffure, like that of the Japanese, from all danger of derangement during sleep.

The eating customs of the Japanese differ also widely from ours. An European officer, who was in Yeddo, describes a dinner to which he was invited by one of the ministers of a provincial prince. Hot saki, a fermented liquor made from rice, was first passed from hand to hand in a delicate porcelain cup, thin as an egg-shell. Eggs variously prepared, a sort of raddish preserved or pickled, fish raw and cooked, boiled bamboo roots and shell-fish, formed the first course. The tables, about a foot high, were then brought and placed one before each guest, who squatted on his heels, if able to do so—which Europeans seldom are, at least for any considerable length of time. They generally sit on the mats cross-legged. The little tables on this occasion bore each a huge bowl of rice and two lacquered bowls, each containing a different soup, the principal ingredients of which were eggs, mushrooms, vegetables, rice cakes and tiny fish. Broiled fish was served also, chopsticks, of course, being used in place of knives and forks. The dinner was enlivened by singing, the performers being young girls, accompanying themselves with odd-looking, long-necked guitars of three strings. The dinner ended with tea, served in little cups; afterwards came smoking in tiny pipes, and the performance of dancing-girls.



A JAPANESE BED.

THE JAPANESE.

ONE can hardly look at the illustration on this page without a sense of uneasiness and stiffness about the neck. Yet the bed here shown is the common one found everywhere in Japan. The sleep-

instruction of moralists, and the remonstrances of reason, prevail to a greater or less degree in every mind; even they who most steadily withstand it, find it, if not the most violent, the most pertinacious of their passions, always renewing its attacks, and, though often vanquished, never destroyed.

HIS DEAR LITTLE WIFE.*

BY THE AUTHOR OF "MIRIAM, AND THE LIFE SHE LAID DOWN."

CHAPTER X.

DRIFTING.

THIS conversation made a deep impression on Lester, and enabled him to see, as in a mirror, the very face of his inner self, and to discover that the essential quality of his love for his wife was self-love.

Was it really true, as his friend had said, that Rose was really fading and failing? He could not push the suggestion away—could not get out of his ears the sound of alarm which had been struck. His eyes had clearer sight when next they rested upon the face of his wife. Something had gone out of it which he had never missed before. "Her fragile form and sweet, sad face!" With almost a shock these words of his friend dropped back into his thoughts. How small and fragile she looked now! Where had gone the freshness and rich color of his beautiful flower? He had not missed it, consciously, in the morning; but now he searched for it in vain. "The sweet, sad face." Ah, here it was! How his soul was moved! Tenderness, and pity, and fear came in upon him. Fear? Yes, and that was strongest; for what if she were to go on fading and failing until she vanished out of sight!

The heart of Rose felt the change in her husband. It was as if a warm south wind had come back to the pale blossoms that were withering in the chill airs of later autumn; and she turned and leaned towards him as a flower to the sun, and put out soft tendrils, and made a new effort to take hold upon him, and lift herself up into clearer airs and out of the chilling shadow. How the old beauty seemed for a little while to grow about her, and the old life to flow again into her heart!

But Archie Lester soon returned into his real self. The truth had come to him—the truth as to the quality of his love for his wife, and the utter impossibility of any true marriage between them while that quality was unchanged. But as one beholding his face in a glass, he had turned himself away, and forgotten what manner of man he was. As for Rose, the chill of the later autumn airs fell down upon her heart again, and the tendrils it was putting forth lost their power to cling. The new thrill of life which had sent its sweet impulse through every vein, and nerve, and fibre of her soul, died away; the old waste—the fading and the failing—went on again; and, as before, all eyes but those of her husband saw the steady change.

As Rose grew weaker, she grew gentler. The willfulness and petulance—so her husband called it—with which she had so often set herself against him, when he made an effort to have his own will by force of authority, gradually died out. Not that she was

more compliant to the assertion of his will. She only let him exhaust himself as a man beating the air, and then groped on as before, feeling along the way she was going as one who walks in the dark. If she lost, so lost he. Not a tithe of what she would have done for him out of love was authority ever able to extort. Love would have made her sensitive about his comforts, and fertile in methods for securing his happiness. But exaction wrought indifference and neglect.

But, as we have said, she grew gentler as she grew weaker; and this gentleness had its effect on her husband. He was no longer blinded by her re-actions, nor hurt by any impatient words that were wrong from her in moments of pain or irritation. To Lester, a great change had come over his wife—a change that drew her nearer to him, and made him oftener feel an impulse to take her in his arms, and lay his kisses on her lips, and tell her how much he loved her. And whenever he did this, she would rest against him—sometimes with shut eyes, through which the tears crept and glistened; and sometimes with a hungry look lifted to his face, the meaning of which he never wholly understood.

Fading and failing! Her husband began to perceive this more and more clearly. Scales were falling from his eyes. All at once the truth flashed upon him, and he saw that she was not only fading and failing, but actually drifting away from him!

He had left her one morning looking paler than usual. She had accompanied him to the street door, a thing long omitted, but resumed of late; and he had given her a warmer kiss than was his wont at parting. As he drew back and looked into her eyes, he saw something in their expression that haunted him all day long. Just what it meant he did not know. Philip Lawson, who had an office close by, dropped in upon him late in the afternoon.

"What's the matter?" he asked, seeing on his friend's countenance an unusually sober expression.

"Nothing," was answered, with a quiet shake of the head. But the tone of Lester's voice was not in agreement with the word.

"You are dull."

"Yes."

"Not feeling well?"

"As well as usual. But the fact is, there's been something like a shadow over me all day long. If I were given to low spirits, I could understand it; but I am not."

Lawson waited for him to say more. But Lester not only remained silent, but lapsed into reverie.

"I have not had the pleasure of meeting your wife for some time. How is she?"

Lester almost started at the question, and his friend thought that he saw a troubled expression in his eyes. That a very tender look came into them, and that they glistened with unusual moisture, he did not fail to observe.

"I hardly know what to say about her, Philip." He spoke seriously. "She's very sweet, and gentle, and loving; and her face grows so beautiful some-

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times, with a strange, new beauty, that I often look into it, half in wonder and half in fear. You will think me fond and foolish; but, so it is, and I cannot help it." Then, after a brief pause:

"I don't know what it means; but, whenever I've thought of Rose, to-day, I've had a singular impression about her." Another pause, and then, with a slight holding of the breath:

"As if she were drifting away from me!"

"You must stretch out your hands and draw her back," said Philip Lawson, in a low, earnest, penetrating voice.

"What if she be already out of my reach?"

The fears which Lester had been holding away came crowding in upon him.

"Love is strong, and draws with a subtle magnetism that is well nigh irresistible. Hold her back by love, my friend. A love that asks nothing and gives everything. Not the old love that drew you to her, but the new and higher love that will draw her to you."

"I must go," said Lester, rising abruptly. "There was something in the dear child's face, when I left her this morning, that has been haunting me all day."

On reaching home he did not find his wife in their pretty parlor, nor in the sitting-room. Nor did he hear the voice nor little pattering feet of his boy Archie. The house was strangely silent.

"Where is Mrs. Lester?" he asked of the servant, who met him in the hall.

"In her room," adding, after a moment: "She hasn't been down since you went away, this morning, sir. I'm afraid she's not very well."

When Lester pushed open the door of their chamber, a sight met his eyes that took the color out of his face and made his heart stand still. Other eyes might not have seen all that he saw; but his vision had suddenly become very clear. Rose was lying on the bed, with her little boy close beside her. Both were asleep. He had come in so silently that his entrance had not disturbed them.

There was a tint so faint as scarcely to be seen on the pale, pure face of his wife, but enough to give the skin a soft translucence, as if from the shining of a light within. Her golden hair lay around her head, and in rippling masses on the pillow, like a warm halo, making the face whiter by contrast. The lips were drawn closely together, and there rested upon them an expression of unutterable sadness, as of one who had seen a beautiful hope die out forever.

Drifting—and already well nigh beyond his reach! No wonder that the color went off of Lester's face. No wonder that his heart stood still. Fading, and failing, and drifting! He knew it all now. This fragile flower, rose-tinted once, but now faded almost to lily-whiteness, and drooping its head on the slender stalk which bore it above the earth—a single breath might scatter its fragrant petals!

Never had the man's heart been stirred so deeply. A little while he stood gazing at the face, which was still a marvel of beauty.

"Rose! Rose!" Lester could bear the suspense no longer. He laid his hand softly on his wife's head as he uttered her name.

She seemed to hear as one far away, moving slightly at the sound of his voice. Twice he called, and then her eyes unclosed and she looked up—a little strangely at first, as though not sure that she were awake or dreaming.

"My darling! What is it? You are not sick?" There was the tenderest concern in Lester's voice, and he kissed her as he spoke.

He saw her lips quiver and tears creep into her eyes. She tried to smile and to answer. But the smile faded out quickly, and the quivering lips refused to speak.

"What is it, dear?" Lester pressed his questions anxiously, drawing at the same time his arm under her head and holding it against his breast. He felt the warm tears falling on his hand.

"I am so weak," Rose said, at last, when she could control her voice. "Weak and good for nothing. I've been trying so hard to keep up for your sake and dear little Archie—but it's no use."

She hid her face in her husband's bosom, and sobbed helplessly.

Ah, if Archie Lester had given a tithe of the love, and care, and tender consideration that he was now ready to lavish upon his fading flower, as he felt the sweet odors of its crushed leaves penetrating his soul, it might not have faded thus—might not so have lain broken and helpless on his bosom!

Conscious of a daily loss of strength, Rose had been trying for many weeks to keep up, concealing, as best she could, the truth from her husband. What he had seen in her eyes that morning was the shadow her heart had thrown into them as she felt the life going out of nerve and muscle, and a weakness against which she had no defense, bearing her helplessly down.

Back from the door through which he had gone out, she had moved with unsteady step, taking hold of whatever came in her way. It might be only a momentary loss of strength. So she thought, and sat down for a little while in the parlor, waiting for its restoration. But it did not return. Archie came in and climbed into her lap; but his weight seemed to have doubled itself. The room began to grow dark about her, and for awhile she felt as if she were going to faint. When this passed off, she made an effort to reach her chamber. Her limbs trembled and were so weak that it was with difficulty she succeeded in getting up-stairs. Once in her room, she threw herself upon the bed, as weak in mind as in body, and remained there until her husband came home.

It was but natural that Rose should feel the motions of a strong desire to get back the strength she had lost—a desire kindled in the flame of her husband's new regard, which had burned up so suddenly. How earnestly she tried to lift herself; to throw, by an act of will, life and vigor into the failing springs of her life. She responded with a gentle and patient

acquiescence to everything suggested and provided for her restoration. Tonics, change of air, mineral springs, the sea-side and the mountains—all were tried; and each in its turn gave brief promise of reviving health.

By these Lester was able to check the seaward drift, and draw the frail bark, laden with so precious a life backwards towards the shore it was leaving. But it never grounded its tiny keel thereon again. Over the bar, and within the line of breakers, and then—what then? Ah, must we write it! The very hand that drew her in pushed her out again!

Archie Lester was not a new man. The old selfish life was just as strong in him as ever. The face seen in the glass he had straightway forgotten. So long as the outward drift was apparent, and the danger of loss imminent, he was the devoted lover and the untiring watcher. Self, with all its cold exactions, its betrayals of indifference, its mean appropriations, its hardness and its repulsions, was hidden out of sight; and then Rose would lean towards him as a flower to the sun, and drink in of the life for which her heart was faint and hungry. Light would come back to her eyes, and a warmer color bloom out in her face. Her drooping form would lift itself more erectly, and in all her movements would become apparent a measure of the old freedom and sense of enjoyment.

And then—it must be written—and then the danger past and the fear gone, self would come out of its hiding, and the hand which had so lately drawn, with an eager solicitude in its firm but gentle hold, the drifting vessel of life back from the illimitable sea, would push it out again upon the dark and seething waters. And each time it floated farther and farther away from the land!

CHAPTER XI.

WITH THE ANGELS.

EACH time—shoreward now, and seaward now; but each time the drift carried this frail vessel farther and farther away from the land; and once it happened that it never came back! Once it happened that the little bark floated off from the shore, going with a slow and even motion. The sky that bent over it was blue and cloudless; the air soft with summer-warmth; and the breeze that fell upon the waters so light that it hardly made a ripple on their glassy surface. Eyes full of love, and hearts filled with tenderness, looked and longed after it; and when its tiny form began to grow less and less, still floating and floating away, and the fear came with a sudden shock that it might never return, there fell a great darkness upon those who stood upon the shore. Beckoning hands were thrown out eagerly. Voices laden with love and fear went forth over the widening space. But the lessening vessel drifted on and on, until the tear-dimmed eyes that were straining after it saw only the sky and sea!

For the tender child-wife and mother it happened as we have said. In the evening it was light, though for a long, long time, and when it should have been

the sunniest season of her life, she was in darkness, drifting she knew not whither.

But the light that fell upon her was not from this side. It was the clear shining into her soul of a light that came breaking through the half-transparent veil her hand was about to lift—the veil that lies between the land of passing shadows and the land that is real.

One draught, bitterest of all, had been placed to her lips; and though she turned her head this way and that in her despair, and prayed in her agony that the cup might pass, she had to drink it, and to the very dregs. The angels who were drawing her upwards came first for her little Archie and bore him away. If a mother's love, to which fear gave a double strength, could have held him back from their arms, the little one had not died. But a purer and stronger love than hers had reached down after the baby, and lifted him away from her tightening clasp; but not from her loving heart, which soon began releasing its earthly attachments, letting one after another drop away, and putting forth new but invisible tendrils that stretched themselves into the life beyond.

Only for a brief season did Rose sit in the shadow of her despair, weeping for her little one because he was not. Only for a little while did her heart lie down with him in the valley of death. Not dead, but risen! Not cold, and silent, and impassive as marble, but full of warm and radiant life, and more beautiful a thousand fold in his new and more perfectly organized spiritual body than when clad in the earthly investiture he had laid aside forever. Into this comforting assurance the mother began to rise after the first darkness of her sorrow had passed, the light coming in slowly, and gaining increase day by day until the clearer shining came.

The loss of his child came at first as a staggering blow to Archie Lester. Spoiled and willful as the little one had become under the misrule of weak indulgence and protection on the one side, and of impatience and unwise repression on the other, his almost faultless beauty, and his affectionate nature, which was continually making itself felt in a thousand winning ways, had made him very dear to his father; and when he saw him die, it seemed, at first, as if the bereavement had taken all the sunshine from his life. But, even before the tiny form out of which the spirit had gone was laid away under the grass and the flowers, a comforting thought made its way into Lester's mind. Ever since the baby came, Rose had been growing away from him. Now she would turn to him again, and their lives would fall into closer harmony. The baby had been first; how often had he realized this in the loss of his wife's consideration for his needs and comforts. All this would be changed now. Rose would be the dear angel of his home once more, and make his life sweeter and more satisfying to himself than it had been for a long time. Yes, it was a comforting thought, and took away much of the bitterness from the cup of sorrow he was drinking.

So it was with the father. His thought turned to himself and to the good he was to find in the kernel of this sad bereavement; and, because of this thought, the self-forgetting pity for his wife that was beginning to flow into his manly nature, held itself back. Almost passively he waited for the lifting of her bowed head, and for a returning interest in himself; but, so far as he was concerned, the waiting was in vain. It might have been different if her subtle intuitions had not discerned the truth. Love, true love, might have availed even now to draw her back from the drifting current and moor her safely by his side. But self-love had no such power. It was a hand that pushed her away from the shore.

The lifting of the bowed head came, after a little season; and the waiting husband, already weary with waiting, looked into the face from which so much of earthly beauty had faded, but in which he now saw a beauty far more exquisite than it had ever worn before—looked to find a reviving interest in himself; but it was not there. Nor did he find a reflection of his face in the clear eyes, which never seemed to rest directly in his, but were always bent a little upwards, and with a far-away expression in their azure depths.

There was the passage of a long winter; the opening of spring, with its refreshing greenness and scent of bursting bud and unfolding leaf, and then the warmth, and beauty, and fragrance of early summer. How steady the drift had been all through these cold and sombre days; but now the watchers on the shore took heart again. There was a pause in the outward movement. It seemed as if the new life of nature were flowing in upon Rose also. Her eyes grew brighter, and into her pale, transparent face there came a few faint flushes of color, more delicate than any tintings of shell or blossom. A little strength came also. And what a new, and tenderer, and more spiritual beauty began flowing in and expressing itself through all the wasted and failing lineaments which, day by day, for so many months, had been steadily losing roundness, and grace, and color. But, one thing did not return—her interest in the external life back into which loving hearts and fast-clinging hands were seeking to draw her. It was too late. The fine tendrils of her nature, as they sought to lay hold of this external life, had been torn away, and bruised, and frosted too often. There was no longer any vital power in them.

Ah, with what a sinking of the heart did this conviction force itself upon Archie Lester, day by day, as the summer increased, and he sought to awaken in the heart of Rose a new interest in himself and in what was passing around her! She was very gentle and passive. If, when the air was soft and warm, he proposed to drive her out, she met his wishes with a sweet acquiescence; though she would rather have stayed at home; and, in all things, so far as strength permitted, let him lead her whither he would; only, he could not lead her back into love—for that way was barred, and the bars impassable. She had tried to love this man—had tried, oh, so hard! to take hold of him, and lift herself into the light, and strength,

and freedom of his manhood; and always he had hurt and bruised her tender heart, until it turned away from him in its weakness and dumb despair. It was too late now. Archie Lester had been self-blind, and unable to see his opportunity. It had passed, and forever!

But, for all this, she was, as we have said, very gentle, and passive, and sweet with her husband, and when he saw, in the waning summer, that she was waning also, and that the end was not very far off, a deeper tenderness for the pure and lovely being than he had ever knew came flowing into his heart. What would he not have given—what would he not have sacrificed to save his darling little wife, dearer and lovelier now than she had ever seemed before? Ah, why is it, weak, blind, selfish mortals that we are, that to our dull eyes our blessings so often brighten only as they fade? That we know our angels only by their parting glances? God help us!

There came a time—it was not very far off—when the summer died; "a sweet, sad time," that brought the end. The end? No, not the end. If we write truly, we must say the beginning; for death is only another name for life. The lifting of a curtain that is dark on this side, but bright with eternal sunshine on the other.

For an hour before the last faint breath of mortal life went out through the lips of the dying one, she lay almost as quiet as a sleeping infant, with her head drawn closely against the breast of her husband. The long-dreaded time had come. The beautiful flower which had been gathered in its spring-time lay broken and withered upon Archie Lester's bosom. And why? Was it possible for him to keep this sad, accusing question out of his mind? No, it was not possible! Broken and withered—but with an ex-haling sweetness in the crushed petals that filled his heart and soul.

There is a motion of the quiet head; a quiver in the brown lashes; a thrill running over the face. Then the large blue eyes open. It is a whole hour since her husband has looked into them. What does he see? A reflection of himself, as in a mirror? No. The eyes into which he is gazing are so full of immortal visions that they have almost lost the power to form an image of earthly things. She has been among the angels, and has seen the baby after whom her heart has been going ever since they took him out of her arms.

"My baby! My sweet one! My darling!" There is light in her face and joy in her eyes.

A little way back into the outer world she is coming, and the light begins to fade. She sees the tender faces that are around and above her, and feels the pressure of her husband's arm. The light is returning again.

"O Archie!" A glad thrill in her voice. "I have seen him! My baby! Our baby!"

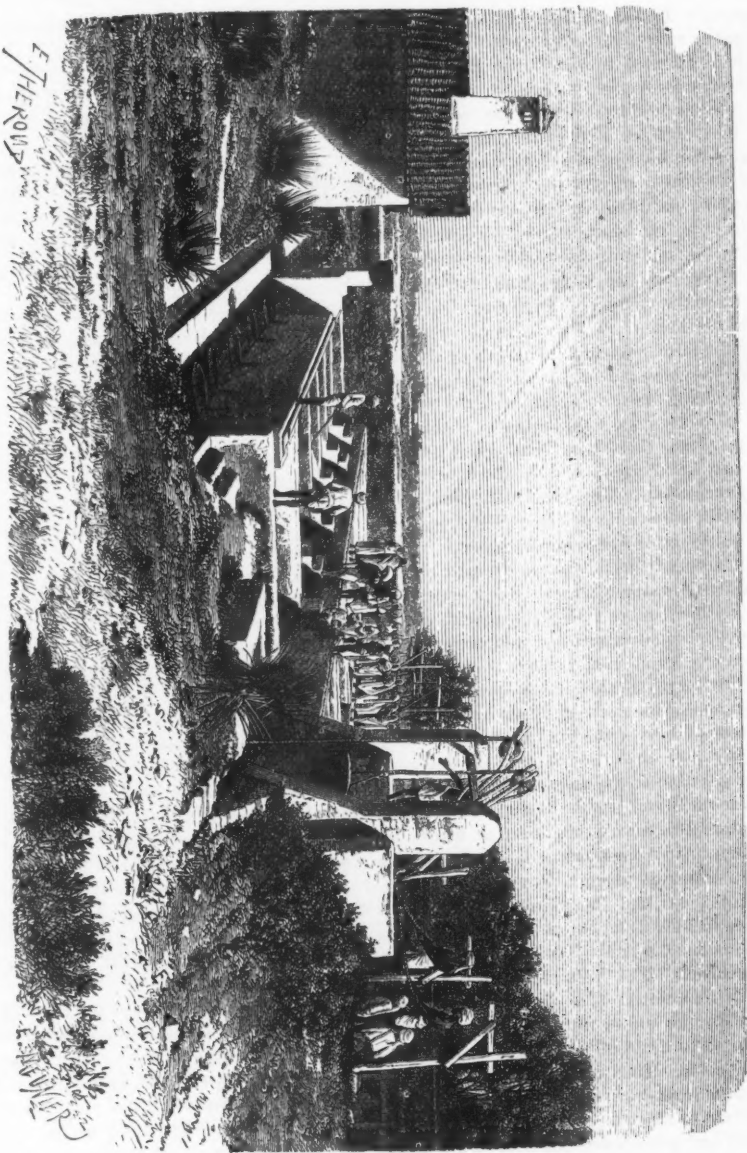
She raises herself as she speaks, but in a few moments sinks back again upon her husband's breast, the eager thrill dying out of her face, and the lids closing down over her beautiful eyes.

So she passes, going to sleep as a baby goes, with the angel of the resurrection close about her, and ready to receive her in her quiet waking on the other side.

THE END.

century; but its use in England, France and Saxony was for a considerable time prevented by a strong prejudice arising from the difficulty experienced in fixing the color. As soon as this difficulty was overcome, the cultivation of the plant, which had been

INDIGO FACTORY NEAR ALAHABAD.



INDIGO.

THE beautiful blue dye yielded by the indigo-plant has been used in India from a very early period, and was imported thence by the ancient Greeks and Romans, but was lost to Europe during a greater part of the middle ages. It was re-introduced by the Dutch about the middle of the sixteenth

long confined to India, extended to many other tropical and subtropical regions, and it is now extensively grown in Egypt, the West Indies, Mexico and Brazil; but it is in India that the product is largest. Bengal produces an average of over nine millions of pounds annually; and it is estimated that Europe alone pays for indigo about ten millions of pounds sterling every year.

Our readers will be interested in an account given by a traveler in India of the manufacture of indigo at Allahabad, an important commercial town, situated at the junction of the Ganges and the Jumna.

"On the day after our arrival at Allahabad," he says, "my companion and I were driven by an English friend engaged in the cultivation of indigo to an indigo factory near the town, in compliance with a desire I had expressed to witness the process of preparing the dye for market. * * *

"The seed is usually sown in the latter part of October in Bengal, as soon as the annual deposit of the streams has been reduced by drainage to a practicable consistency, though the sowing-season lasts quite on to the end of November. On dry ground the plough is used, the *ryots*, or native farm-laborers, usually planting under directions proceeding from the factory. There are two processes of extracting the dye, known as the method of 'from fresh leaves,' and that 'from dry leaves.' I found them here manufacturing by the former process. The vats or cisterns of stone were in pairs, the bottom of the upper one of each couple being about on a level with the top of the lower, so as to allow the liquid contents of the former to run freely into the latter. The upper is the fermenting vat, or 'steepers,' and is about twenty feet square by three deep. The lower is the 'beater,' and is of much the same dimensions with the upper, except that its length is five or six feet greater. As the twigs and leaves of the plants are brought from the fields, the cuttings are placed in the steeper, logs of wood secured by bamboo withes are placed upon the surface to prevent overswelling, and water is then pumped on or poured from buckets to within a few inches of the top. Fermentation now commences, and continues for fourteen or fifteen hours, varying with the temperature of the air, the wind, the nature of the water used and the ripeness of the plants. When the agitation of the mass has begun to subside, the liquor is racked off into the lower vat, the 'beater,' and ten men set to work lustily beating it with paddles; though this is sometimes done by wheels armed with paddle-like appendages. Meanwhile, the upper vat is cleaned out, and the refuse mass of cuttings stored up to be used as fuel or as fertilizing material. After an hour-and-a-half's beating, the liquor becomes flocculent. The precipitation is sometimes hastened by lime-water. The liquor is then drained off the dye by the use of filtering-cloths, heat being also employed to drain off the yellow matter and to deepen the color. Then the residuum is pressed in bags, cut into three-inch cubes, dried in the drying-house and sent to market.

"The dry leaf process depends also on maceration, the leaves being cropped from the ripe plant, and dried in the hot sunshine during two days, from nine in the morning until four in the afternoon.

"On the next day, at an early hour in the morning, my companion and I betook us to the Plains of Alms. I have before mentioned that Allahabad, the ancient city of Prayaga, is doubly sanctified because it is at the junction of the Jumna and the Ganges, as these

two streams are affluents of its sanctity as well as its trade. The great plain of white sand, which is inclosed between the blue lake-like expanses of the two meeting rivers, is the Plain of Alms. In truth, there are three rivers which unite here—the Ganges, the Jumna and the Saravasti—and this thrice-hallowed spot is known in the Hindu mythologic system as the Triveni."

AUTUMN AND WINTER IN THE CALIFORNIA SIERRAS.

AUTUMN and winter are not synonymous terms anywhere but here, where the seasons melt and mingle together so quietly that one is never quite sure when autumn ceased and winter began, or whether, indeed, autumn has not smiled upon us at intervals all through the winter.

In a descriptive sketch of the present limits, only the merest outline of the seasons' characteristics is permitted. Autumn, in these latitudes, does not begin till long after the New England maples have donned their scarlet livery. October is, with us, the last and ripest of the summer months. The woodlands hold the intense green of their foliage till after the first fall rains, which may occur any time after the 15th of October, but rarely earlier.

In going higher among the mountains, however, one finds the season farther advanced, owing to the colder atmosphere. Towards the summit, where the snow in mid-winter lays fifteen feet deep and over, the quivering cotton-wood leaves glow like sheets of yellow flame among the glossy, evergreen groves of pine and tamarack; the cardinal leaves of the poison oak show their fires through the dark underbrush, and the numerous species of cinque-foil plants curl brown and crisp under foot.

Here, where the snow seldom falls to the depth of two feet, and is dissipated in a week or ten days by the warm sun, the earth reveals a carpet of verdure all winter. November finds the foot-hills mottled in green and golden-brown, showing no very decided flash of color, but characterized by a quiet tone and grave depth of beauty that is at once pleasing and satisfying. The leaves withstand the encroachment of time, and cling to the boughs till December winds sweep them from their hold.

I wish I could make you see and feel the glorious beauty that the fall and winter months develop from time to time among these clustering foot-hills. After a three days' storm, perhaps in November, when the flying clouds have left the sky blue as a sapphire, with faint ivory tints along its far horizon, and the air clear and tempered by the sun, a dash on horseback through the woodlands and over the hills brings to view "pictures exquisite as a poet's dream." You are taken at once into the great heart of Nature, out of a world of trouble into a world of extended beauty. Every blue peak in the distance, every shadowy cañon, every glimpse of the reaching valleys, whose long vistas wheel suddenly into view between the autumn hills, become an inspiration and cast over

one's heart a living spell. The fleckless sky bends over distances so vast, that their effect is perfect. Less space would have made Nature gigantic, and admiration of her beauty would be lost in amazement at her proportions. Now one has room for detail, and when wearied of that—if it were possible—can combine the whole into one glorious picture and hang it in the vast halls of memory.

It is living—glorious living to curb one's eager steed with a sure, exultant hold, and fly through flavescens woods to the beat of his ringing steps on the smooth, hard road. For me, no other style of locomotion possesses so many charms. But, to enjoy it thoroughly, horse and rider must be of one accord; no champing of the bit, impatient of delay, when one pauses to gaze at the matchless scenery; no fretful unwillingness to obey his rider's lightest desire when understood. Animals know their friends, and more than once, when I have paused on the brow of a hill commanding a sweep of blue-hazed mountains and misty valleys, have I noticed my own black horse lift his quick, pointed ears in quivering inquiry, and gaze steadily on the scene, motionless as myself. Then, at a single chirp the small ears would fly back, the black head and tossing mane lift listening for an instant, and away we would go through the yellow, rustling leaves that drifted all about us.

After a week or two, perhaps a month, of this bright, sunny weather, the clouds gather in the sky, the south wind moans up the cañons, bearing the crisp leaves in gyres on the wings of the blast. The rain comes down heavily, but not coldly, and the earth is brown and sodden. Sometimes an inch of snow falls to finish up the storm, but disappears as soon as the sun comes out. If it is a rainy winter, and but little snow falls, there will be some beautiful days between every storm.

Last winter (1876), during the month of December, not a drop of rain fell in any part of California. If one could stifle their regrets at the non-appearance of the rain that was so sadly needed, and think solely of the weather—it was glorious! Autumn all the time—calm, dreamy, gold-bound autumn. The sun rose cool and clear, warmed at noontide till the heavy-leaved madroña afforded welcome shade, and declined at night in the flush of a crimson-warm sky. Never an ivory cloud-flake in the glowing heavens from dawn till dark, and the great gold stars were as soft and shimmering as in mid-summer. Christmas day, memorable to us through the shadow of a great sorrow, rolled its slow length through the bright weather, as if June had changed places with December; snow-ball roses hung along the fence and diffused their heavy fragrance till after New Year's, when the long-looked-for rain pelted their soft, white petals to the earth, where they lay stained and trampled till the first snow-fall covered them with its shroud.

Winter in this climate is variable, and one winter is no criterion for another. Once, I remember, snow fell almost to the depth of three feet, and sleighing was resorted to with great hilarity as a means of

amusement. But, alas! the sleigh, which was constructed on immediate demand, had only wooden runners, which cut through the soft snow to the mud beneath, and mishaps innumerable were the result. The snow was light and feathery, but the weather was not cold enough to freeze it, and no amount of travel would suffice to pack it solid enough for enjoyment. It was more like ploughing than sleighing, and we gave it up in despair. Thirty miles beyond us, in the higher mountains, people were enjoying sleighing in all its perfection, with the additional accompaniment of bells.

But, in a few weeks' time, the southern hill-sides showed brown earth covered with patches of glossy, creeping carpet-weed, and presently the soft wind whispered through the tall pines, pink waxen buds hung on the manzanitas, the gold-cup lifted its familiar face from under autumn's dead leaves, and

"The reign of the winter was over,
The sway of the spring coming on."

M. N. HAWLEY.

TELLING A STORY.

LITTLE Blue Eyes is sleepy—
Come here and be rocked to sleep.
What shall I tell you, darling?
The story of "Little Bo-Peep?"
Or of the cows in the garden,
Or the children who ran away?
If I'm to be story-teller,
What shall I tell you, pray?

"Tell me,"—the blue eyes opened
Like pansies, when they blow—
"Of the Baby in the manger—
The little child Christ, you know.
I love to hear that story
The best of all you tell,"
And my four-year-old nestled closer
As the twilight shadows fell.

Then I told my darling over
The old, old tale again,
Of the Baby born in the manger,
And the Christ who died for men.
Of the great, warm heart of Jesus,
And the children whom He blest,
Like the blue eyed boy who listened
As he lay upon my breast.

And I prayed, as the night fell 'round us,
That my child, with eyes so sweet,
Might learn from his Saviour's lesson,
And sit at his Saviour's feet.
Pray God he may never forget it,
But always love to hear
The tender and touching story
That now he holds so dear.

EBEN E. REXFORD.

NELL AND I.

"It is quite hopeless, Nell," I said. "There is not one of them fit to be seen."

A few days before we—that is, Nell and I—had received an invitation to a party—a great event in the lives of girls who went out so rarely and lived so quietly as we did—and we had been busy all the afternoon discussing ways and means, and turning out all our old evening dresses. There they lay on the bed, a tumbled heap of torn grenadine and soiled tarlatan; and Nellie looked very disconsolate as she turned them over and over in the vain hope of finding one presentable enough to be retrimmed and remodeled.

"If the *pater* were like anybody else, he would give us new ones," she said, sadly. "How I wish people could choose their own fathers! I should have one like Mr. Sowerby. Kate says he never even looks at her dressmaker's bills—just asks the amount and gives her a check."

"Yes, but papa is not nearly so rich as Mr. Sowerby," I answered, with that stern sense of justice which is one of my characteristics; "still, he is not so poor as he fancies. There is Jack coming up-stairs; let us see if he can suggest anything."

"Perhaps he could lend us a pound or two," said Nell, brightening up. "Jack, dear, come here a moment."

Jack put in his curly head at the door, whispering his favorite "Belle Mahone."

"Well, what is it? What a turn-out!" he exclaimed. "What are you going to do with that rubbish?"

"The party," Nell explained. "Jack, we haven't a dress to wear, and no money to buy one. You couldn't—could you, dear boy?" she went on, insinuatingly.

Jack put his hand into his pocket, and produced the contents impressively—a shilling, a half-crown, two sixpences and some coppers.

"All I have to live upon till next screw-day," he said, solemnly; and Nell gave a resigned sigh.

"If things didn't get so old-fashioned," she observed, dragging out a satin skirt covered with puffs of tulle, "one might make something of this; but dresses are cut so differently now—so long and straight."

"Only a year ago, and yet what changes there have been! Once satin skirts were all the 'go,' now they are seldom seen," sang Jack, sarcastically. "Why don't you sell your old things? I always sell my old coats."

"It seems so shabby," Nell hesitated, "though lots of people do nowadays—and we shouldn't get much, either."

"Not for those flimsy things, of course," Jack said, contemptuously. "Haven't you any thick dresses or jackets? They are the things to sell."

"Yes, of course we have," I cried. "There are our brown jackets and the winsey dresses and the stripes."

"Not the stripes, Minnie," Nell said, solemnly.

"If they were banished to the wilds of Africa, some one would recognize them and cry, 'Miss Wilmott's stripes!' But we must have plenty of old things; suppose we have a regular turn-out."

Jack settled himself on the ottoman, shut the door, opened the window and lighted his pipe, while Nell and I opened drawers and wardrobes, and brought all sorts of forgotten garments to light. It was astonishing how the pile in the middle of the floor grew, and how our hopes rose in proportion.

"Why, you'll make your fortunes!" Jack cried. "Look here—I'll give you four-and-threepence for the lot, and make what I can out of them."

"Four-and-threepence!" Nell repeated, indignantly, raising her flushed face—Nell is the pretty one of the family; she has our mother's fair complexion and bright brown hair and eyes, while Jack and I take after our father, who is very dark, with almost black eyes and hair, and altogether what an enthusiastic lady friend used to call "Spanish-looking;" but that was in the days of his widowerhood, before he had committed the—to us—unpardonable sin of his second marriage, and I have reason to believe she altered her opinion afterwards. "Four-and-threepence! Why, we shall get pounds! Minnie, I shall have pale blue tarlatan with blush roses. Don't you think that will be pretty?"

"Lovely!" I replied, enthusiastically. "And I shall have black net, with maize puffings and crimson azaleas. But, Nell, how on earth are we to get these things sold? Fancy, if papa knew—"

"He'd go out of his senses, I suppose," Nell put in, coolly. "Oh, perhaps some one may call! They do sometimes; and, if not, we must hunt up some one ourselves. We need not get the dresses till next Wednesday."

But the week went on, and no one in the trade had called, and the big bundle still lay concealed under our bed.

"It is of no use, Minnie," Nell said, mournfully, on the Tuesday afternoon; "we must go out to-night and find a shop. There is one in Cannon's Wynd, I know. Papa and Priscilla"—our step-mother—"are going out to tea to-morrow, and it will be a splendid opportunity. We must have the dresses. I told Maria Harvest yesterday that we were going to have new ones."

"Of course we must," I agreed; so after tea we dressed ourselves in our oldest jackets, tied thick veils over our hats, and, deluding ourselves with the idea that no one could recognize us, stole out of the house and walked quickly down to the town.

"I hope we sha'n't meet any one we know," Nell said, nervously. "Keep on this side, Minnie. There are no shops, and it is not so light. Good gracious, there is Philip!"

Now Nell was engaged to Philip Harvest, who was a lawyer in Everton, very well off and well connected, but much older than Nell, and very strict in his notions of propriety, and of what young ladies should or should not do. His quick eyes caught sight of us at once, and he crossed the road with a surprised

and not altogether approving expression of countenance.

"Why, where are you going?" he asked, as he shook hands. "It is rather late for you to be out alone, isn't it?"

"We are only going to Miss King's," Nell said, hesitating guiltily. "Are you only leaving the office? You are late to-night."

"Yes, I have been busy," Mr. Harvest said. "Going to Miss King's, are you? Well, I'll walk to the door with you."

"No," Nell answered, trying to speak playfully, "you won't. You are tired and hungry, and the tea will be cold and Maria cross. Go home like a good boy. We don't want you."

"But I want to go," Philip said, "seeing, moreover, that I don't like you to be out alone after dark."

He turned as he spoke, and walked along by Nell's side till we reached the Kings' house. It stood a little way back from the road, and just as he opened the gate Mr. Cross came up.

"Going my way, Harvest?" he called out as he raised his hat; and, much to our relief, with a hurried "Good-night" Philip left us and joined his friend. Nell and I stood under the shade of the shrubs till their footsteps had died away, and then walked quickly through two or three back streets till we reached our destination.

Cannon's Wynd was a narrow street connecting two of the principal thoroughfares, and, consisting as it did chiefly of low lodging-houses, beer-shops and public-houses, was justly considered one of the most disreputable places in the town. As we passed hurriedly along, sounds of revelry came from the public-house at the corner, where half a dozen men were drinking beer and singing songs, and in one house just within a passage an Irishman and his wife were differing in opinion regarding the disposal of his wages. Certainly neither their manner nor language was particularly refined; but we were not nervous about that sort of thing—we only shrank away from the quarrelsome couple, and soon found the shop we wanted. The garments hanging outside the door fluttered in the wind with a melancholy air of decayed grandeur.

"Fancy our stripes hanging outside there!" Nell whispered to me as we screwed up courage, and, trusting to the dim light and our thick veils, walked boldly into the shop.

Such a funny shop it was, with all sorts of faded finery scattered about—silk dresses, torn and soiled, children's little frocks, even a baby's robe and a bride's wreath and veil! All sorts of queer notions came into my head as I looked round curiously. Where did all the things come from? Whose fingers had put such dainty work into that baby's frock? What hopes and fears had hovered round that bridal wreath?

A handsome man with a cigar in his mouth and his hat pushed back was sitting on the counter talking to a decent-looking woman, the mistress of the

shop. Nell and I both recognized him at once as a Mr. Poole, a former assistant of Dr. Thompson's, who had been discharged under rather disgraceful circumstances. We could only hope that he had not recognized us as he took the cigar from between his lips and stared with insolent curiosity at Nell's bright eyes and pink cheeks, visible even through her thick veil.

"We want—we understand," Nell began, as the woman came forward with a civil, "What can I do for you, miss?"

"You buy left-off clothing. Could you call at 15, Lother Terrace, to-morrow night about eight?"

"Yes, certainly," the woman said, entering the address in her book. "I will be sure to come, miss."

Much relieved, we turned to the door, and found the street full of an excited crowd. The Irish gentleman and his wife had turned out into the street to finish their conjugal dispute, and were the centre of an admiring crowd, who encouraged both antagonists with a charming impartiality, and did a little scuffling on their own account. Meanwhile policemen's whistles were sounding on all sides, for a regular "row" in Cannon's Wynd was no joke, and Nell and I looked at each other in dismay.

"What shall we do?" Nell whispered. "O Minnie, don't you wish we had never come?" And while we hesitated, Mr. Poole jumped down from the counter and came to the door.

"Ah, a row!" he said, coolly. "Take my arm, ladies, and I'll help you through the crowd. Nay, you must come at once, if at all," he went on, looking quickly at each of us.

"Thank you," Nell said, hurriedly, as he took us, one on each side, and pushed his way through the crowd till we had passed into the quiet street beyond. "We are much obliged," she went on, with a grave little bow, drawing her hand from his arm. "We need not trouble you any further."

But Mr. Poole declined to take his dismissal.

"Allow me to walk a little farther, Miss Wilmot," he said, quietly, while our hopes of being unknown fell to the ground—"I am going your way."

What could we do but walk by his side in an agony of fear lest some of our friends should meet us with our disreputable companion? Oh, what a way it seemed to Lother Terrace! How delighted we were to reach the garden-gate, and dismiss Mr. Poole with a quiet "Good-night!" and calm disregard of his offered hand—how pleased to find ourselves safely in our bed-room, flushed and excited indeed, but safe and unsuspected, with our mission accomplished satisfactorily!

All the next day we were in a state of suppressed excitement. If anything should happen to keep papa and Priscilla at home! If the woman should forget to call! All sorts of dreadful possibilities distracted us. But seven o'clock came, and, with the exception of Philip Harvest, who came in for a few minutes to see Nell, we were alone in the house.

Both Nell and I thought he would never go. She was looking so pretty that night, with her bright eyes

and flushed face, that Philip seemed unable to tear himself away, and lingered leaning against the mantelpiece, looking at her with such loving, admiring eyes that Nell's blushes grew more and more vivid.

"Now you must go," she said at last. "It is nearly eight o'clock, and the Young Men's Christian Association will be in despair if the chairman is late. I suppose, when we are married," Nell said, softly, with a comical smile, and her dimples coming into sight, "you will stay at home like a Christian, and not go running off to meetings?"

"Yes, always," Mr. Harvest declared. "Nell, do you know, I wish you were not going to that party next week; I feel that trouble will come of it."

"Fancy—you indulging in presentiments," Nell laughed, "and such absurd presentiments, too! Will you have a flower before you go?" she went on, taking a tiny rosebud from the vase and fastening it in his coat.

"You know what the meaning is, don't you, Nell?" Philip whispered, detaining the little hand as it rested on his breast. "May I have that as well?"

"Yes, I know, but I can't give it to you now," Nell said, lifting her sweet eyes to his shyly. "You took that long ago."

Punctually at eight the bell rang, and the woman we had seen the night before entered, and was shown up-stairs by Nell. The wonderful bundle was quickly unfolded. How she did examine every article, depreciating the good points, showing off the bad, while Nell and I stood meekly by, our hopes of a golden harvest fast fading away!

"I'll give you three pounds for the lot, ladies," she said, when the performance was over, and her great bag had swallowed up our garments.

Three pounds! We had expected four, at least; but, too anxious to get her out of the house before any one came, we did not hesitate, so accepted the offer at once, and then sat down with stern business faces to calculate the number of yards of tarlatan we should require for our dresses. Jack and I had what we called "a forage" that night to celebrate the event—an exciting amusement, indulged in only on special occasions, and which consisted in opening, by an ingenious system of our own, one of the cupboards containing all Priscilla's pet luxuries, and fondly deemed by her impregnable. Oh, dear, how delicious were those slices of ham, cooked over the kitchen fire long after everybody else was in bed! How superior was the flavor of the almonds and raisins which composed our second course!

I think we should have been perfectly happy for the next few days had it not been that Mr. Poole seemed to haunt our lane. Always once, and generally twice a day, he lounged past, staring up at the windows till we were afraid to go near them.

"Nell, shall we have to speak to him if we meet?" I asked one day, as Nell, with an impatient exclamation: "Here's that man again!" shrank out of sight behind the curtain.

"I don't know," she answered, doubtfully. "He was very polite to us. Still, I'd much rather not. Perhaps we sha'n't meet him," she went on, hopefully. "Hold this tulle, Minnie."

But, a day or two afterwards, as we were walking with Miss Harvest—who, though she is Philip's sister, is a horrid, spiteful cat—we met Mr. Poole face to face, and he took off his hat and bowed with an easy assurance that sent the color to Nell's face. For he never took any notice of me. It was at Nell that he looked with such passionate, admiring eyes, Nell's face on which his glances lingered, at the mere sight of which his own seemed to soften, and change, and grow young and handsome.

"Do you know Mr. Poole?" Miss Harvest asked, in a very astonished tone, turning up her nose contemptuously—all the Harvests have aquiline noses—it is a characteristic of the family, and they are as proud of them as if nature had presented them with a monopoly of the article. "Nellie, I am sure Philip would be very angry. Does he know?"

Nellie flushed angrily. Nothing irritated her so much as to have "Philip wouldn't like this," or "Philip would never allow that," flung at her head.

"I don't know, I am sure," she replied, carelessly. "No, I don't think he does."

"I thought not," Miss Harvest said, severely. "He is the last person in the world Philip would approve of your knowing. Philip will be very particular about his wife's friends."

"Yes, and when I am Philip's wife, I suppose he will have the right to choose mine," Nell retorted, hotly; "till then I can manage my own affairs."

She walked on with erect head and bright eyes, and out of pure opposition, gave one of her sweetest smiles and bows to Mr. Poole, whom we met again as we returned from our walk.

"Horrid old thing!" Nell said, viciously, as she ran up-stairs and flung her hat on to the bed. "Now she'll go with a long tale to Philip. Oh, dear, what disagreeable people there are in the world!"

Philip came in that evening with a very solemn face, which brightened and cleared at Nell's evident delight at his unexpected appearance.

"I am so glad; I scarcely thought you would come to-night," she said, as he drew a chair close to her side. She was leaning back in her low seat, dressed in dark blue serge, with a knot of scarlet ribbon at her neck, and her bright hair all twisted in a great coil round her head.

"Do you know I was going to give you a lecture to-night?" he said, softly, after awhile. "Maria tells me you spoke to Poole to-day. Nell, dear, he is not a proper person for you to know; don't do it again."

He smiled kindly as he spoke, and put his hand caressingly on Nell's shoulder, but there was a too decided ring of command in his voice, which irritated her, and she pushed his hand away pettishly.

"I don't know him—at least, scarcely," she said—"and it can't possibly do me any harm just to bow to the man—such nonsense!"

"Well, don't do it again," Mr. Harvest repeated; "promise, Nell."

I don't know what Nell would have answered, or what rash promises she would have made, but just at that moment the door opened and papa came in, and the subject dropped. Mr. Harvest was going away the next morning on business, and expected to be absent a week, returning the day after the party, and Nell was lamenting over his absence.

"Well, I hope you'll enjoy yourselves," Philip said, as he rose to go. I might have been a stick or a stone, for all the notice those two took of me; and, of course, I was kind to them, and did not take much notice, either. "Don't flirt too much with any one person. Nell, I suppose it's of no use telling you not to flirt at all?"

"Not a bit," Nell replied, smiling with very misty eyes; "but I shall not enjoy it half so much, now. How I wish you were going."

I wished so, too, when the long-expected night came, and Nell stood before the glass pinning the roses in her hair; I was so proud of Nell, and I had never seen her look so pretty before.

"Will that do? Do I look nice?" she asked, turning round, after a long look in the glass.

"Lovely!" I answered. "But you always do, Nell. And what do you think of me? Of course, I don't come up to you, but still—"

"But still," Nell said, laughing, "you are fishing for compliments, little one. Well, you look very nice. Minnie, what fun it would be if some one fell in love with you, and we could both be married the same day!" And then the cab drove up with the married cousin who was to chaperon us, and we drove away.

Did any one ever enjoy a party so much as I did the first part of that one, I wonder? Philip's absence was a slight drawback to Nell's pleasure, but, as my card filled rapidly, and one after another was introduced to me, my enjoyment was perfect—that is, till the latter part of the evening. I had not seen much of Nell; we had generally danced in different sets, and I had been too much taken up with my own affairs to think much of her. In one of the quadrilles, however, she happened to be my *vis-à-vis*, and I saw, to my horror and surprise, that her partner was the objectionable Mr. Poole. Nell looked flushed and nervous, and went through her share of the figure in a mechanical, lifeless way, very different from her usual graceful style, while Miss Harvest, sitting opposite, watched her with horrified eyes and a severely surprised expression of countenance. I think Nell noticed her, for the first time, as she crossed over in the third figure, and instantly, as if by magic, the tired, worried look vanished, and she turned to her partner smiling and talking in her usual pleasant way.

"Shall we go into the conservatory?" I heard him whisper, when the dance was finished; and Nell, with a defiant look towards Miss Harvest, and a whispered "As well be hung for a sheep as a lamb, Minnie," as she passed, swept out of the room on Mr. Poole's arm.

"Shall we follow them?" I suggested to my partner; and then, as we entered the conservatory, and I sank down on the chair he placed, "Don't wait," I went on; "I know you are engaged for this dance, and I am so tired, and my sister is here."

So, with a muttered apology, he left me, and returned to the room, while I looked eagerly to the other end, where the two were standing, with the moonlight streaming through the glass roof, shedding a pale glory round Nell's head and turning her dress into a silver cloud. I ought not to have listened, I know; but it was not out of curiosity that I crept a little nearer—it was for Nell's sake—Nell, who was everything to me—whom I loved better than any one or anything in the whole world. She was playing nervously with her bouquet, and her eyes were fixed on Mr. Poole's face with a wondering, puzzled expression.

"I never had a chance," he was saying, moodily—"never, from a boy. No one ever cared whether I went wrong or right, and I never cared myself till quite lately—till that night when you looked up into my face with your sweet, innocent eyes, and thanked me so earnestly for the little service I had rendered you; then I would have given anything to be different—and it is too late now."

"It is never too late," Nell said, gently. "Mr. Poole, I know nothing of your past, of the life you have led; but I do know that as long as we live it is always possible to repent and amend. Indeed, it is never too late."

"The life I have led! Why, there is not a single day in my life fit for eyes like yours to scan!" Mr. Poole cried. "Miss Wilmott, I am going away soon to begin a new life in a new country. If I could hope you would think of me now and then, not as the wretch I am now, but as what I might have been, as what I will be, it would me such a help."

"I will," Nell said, holding out her hand to him, impulsively; "I will think of you, not as you are now, but as what I hope you will some day be; and, Mr. Poole," Nell went on, softly, her eyes growing very sweet and misty, "I can't talk of such things, but there is One who will help you, oh, so much, if you will only ask."

"Heaven bless you!" Mr. Poole said, huskily.

He bent over the little hand, which looked so wonderfully white in the moonlight, and raised it reverently to his lips, just as a hasty exclamation attracted my attention.

I turned in time to see Miss Harvest standing in the doorway, and then I was terribly afraid for my darling. I knew what a garbled account would reach Philip. I knew his hasty, jealous temperament, and I felt also that Nell would never repeat the words Mr. Poole had spoken, never betray the confidence he had placed in her that night.

Some one came to look for me just then, and I went back to the room, feeling tired and depressed, as if all the enjoyment of the evening had vanished. Nell came in alone by and by, and sat down in a quiet corner, talking to Dr. Craythorne.

"Nell, dear, are you tired? Would you like to go?" I said, crossing over as soon as the dance was finished.

"Going? Not yet, surely?" Dr. Craythorne interrogated. "Why, Miss Minnie, you are engaged to me for two more waltzes!"

"But, if Nell is tired—" I hesitated, for Allan Craythorne was very nice, indeed, and I should have been sorry to miss my dances; still, if Nell was tired, I was willing to forego them.

"But I am not," she declared, smiling. "I am going to dance myself. Run away, Minnie, and don't worry your small head about me."

So I took Dr. Craythorne's arm, and, in the delightful waltz that followed, almost forgot Nell and her troubles.

"Well, did you enjoy it as much as you expected?" my sister asked, when we were alone in our room, pulling off our tumbled finery. "Or were you disappointed? Oh, dear, how tired I am!"

"It was delightful!" I answered, enthusiastically. "But I didn't like your dancing with that horrid man."

"And I didn't like it myself," Nell acknowledged, coloring a little—"only, I couldn't help it very well; and I know Philip will be vexed. But don't call Mr. Poole 'that horrid man,' Minnie. Do you know, I don't think he is half so bad as people say."

"Don't you?" I answered, doubtfully. "Nell, I must tell you something. I was in the conservatory and heard what he said to you, and saw him kiss your hand; and, O Nell, Miss Harvest saw him, too!"

Nell grew rather white.

"You ought not to have listened, Minnie," she said, quietly, after a pause. "So, Miss Harvest saw him, did she? And, of course, she will tell Philip. Well, I am glad that, after all, you were there, Minnie, to hear what he said. There was no harm in it, was there, poor fellow? Now, promise you will never repeat a word of what you heard to Philip."

"But, Nell, you will tell him, won't you?" I cried. "He will be sure to ask all about it, and, if you don't tell him—O Nell, don't quarrel with Philip, for that man's sake!"

"Philip will believe me without explaining—at least, I think so," Nell said—"I should believe him—but, if not—well, it can't be helped," she concluded, firmly. "I can't tell him."

Philip was to return the next afternoon, and was coming to spend the evening with Nell. I could see how nervous and uneasy she got as the time drew near—how anxiously she listened to each passing footstep, each ring at the bell. She sat down at the piano at last, and began to sing and play little scraps of songs, breaking off every now and then to listen. By and by she struck the opening chords of Vivian's song, and sang it right through with a force and passion that astonished me.

"Trust me not at all, or all in all."

High and clear her voice rang through the room,

singing the concluding line, as the door opened and Mr. Harvest came in.

One glance at his stern, changed face, told Nell that she had been judged and condemned already, and all the softness and pathos died out of her face, leaving in their place a hard, defiant look.

"So you have heard all, and condemned me already," she said, coldly. "I thought the worst criminals were allowed a trial."

"Well, don't look like that," Philip cried. "Heaven knows, I am willing enough to listen to any explanation, to hear any excuse! But what am I to believe? It is true, I suppose? You allowed that man, who is not fit to speak to any lady, to dance with you, to—how can I say it?—make love to you, kiss your hand?"

"He kissed my hand, certainly," Nell answered, "but, if you had heard our conversation—Philip"—and Nell's voice grew very sweet and soft as she laid her hand on his arm—"believe me, dear, there was no harm in it—but it was meant only for my ears. Don't you love me well enough to trust me, dear? Ah, if I were in your place!"

Philip hesitated, looking down with a softened face into her pleading eyes.

"If you will tell, Nell, I will believe," he said. "How did you know him at all? Who introduced him to you?"

Even then, in the midst of her trouble, Nell smiled at the remembrance of the first meeting.

"He never was introduced to me," she said, simply. "He was very kind once, and I am grateful, but I can't tell you about it now. I should some day, if things had gone right, but not now."

"Yes, some day—when we were married, I suppose, and it was too late to draw back," Philip commented, sarcastically; and Nell grew very white and calm.

"After that," she said, quietly, "there is, of course, no more to be said. It is not too late to draw back now, at all events."

She slipped her engagement-ring from off her finger as she spoke and laid it on the table by his side.

"Trust me not at all, or all in all," I heard her whisper—heard also Philip's stern answer:

"It must be not at all, then;" and then the door closed, and Philip had gone, and it was all over.

Nell came to the fire and stood looking down with such a sad, sad face.

"Don't fret, darling," she said, softly, putting her hand on my shoulder; "I shall get over it, I dare say. Only I thought he cared for me. I was mistaken, it seems. There can be no love where there is no trust."

"But, Nell, if you would only let me tell him," I cried, clinging to her, "it would be all right. It is all that horrid old wretch of a sister, Nell darling!" But Nell only smiled and shook her head.

"Do you remember the little china ornament you threw down the other day, Minnie? We patched it up well, didn't we? I don't think Priscilla ever noticed it was broken, but you and I can see the joins

plainly enough, and know how easily it will give way again."

"Yes; but I don't see what that has to do with it," I observed. It seemed so funny for Nell to talk about china ornaments just then.

"Don't you?" she answered. "I was thinking that perhaps if I were very meek and humble, Philip might forgive me, and we might patch up our broken love and confidence so cleverly that no one but ourselves would ever guess it had been broken; but we should always know. It would never be the same to us—never a good, serviceable article—only a patched pit of china."

The next few weeks were very miserable, though Nell bore the wonder and curiosity caused by her broken engagement much better than I expected. How savage I used to get when Priscilla moaned over the good chance Nell had thrown away, or the linen bought and hemmed in vain! "Such a pity! Of course it would injure Nellie so much; people always blamed the girl in such cases."

Poor Priscilla was dying to know why the engagement had been broken off, and of course we were both obstinately silent. Mr. Harvest and his sister had been silent, too, and, as Mr. Poole had disappeared, no one dreamt of connecting him with it—for which we were all devoutly thankful. So the winter wore on, and the spring with its long, light days rapidly advanced; and, if it had not been for my anxiety about Nell, I should have been perfectly happy, for ever since the party, Dr. Craythorne had taken to spending all his spare time at our house. Of course he was our doctor, and it was only natural—as I told them—that he should take an interest in us; but, for all that, Jack and Nell used to laugh and look at me when his ring came at the door, till my cheeks were in a perfect flame, and I felt inclined to run away, anywhere out of sight.

"We have changed places now, Minnie," Nell said, one night, with her sweet smile. "You used to play propriety last year—now it's my turn. Well, little one, I hope your love-affair will have a happier ending than mine had."

"Nell, is it quite ended?" I whispered, kneeling down by her side. "Don't you care for him still?"

"I shall always care for him," Nell said, quietly; "I don't mean to say I will never marry any one else—of course I shall if I've a chance—but no one will ever be quite like Philip to me. There is Dr. Craythorne coming up the garden. Oh, don't get so warm, child! Used I to get as warm when Philip came, I wonder?"

"Ten times warmer," I said, seriously; and then Allan came in with his pleasant smile and greeting.

I noticed him watching Nell intently several times that evening, and noticed also how thin and pale my sister was growing, and how dark were the circles under her soft eyes. And then for the first time a dreadful possibility struck me. If Nell should die—Nell, my darling, who had always been the life and sunshine of the house—Nell, to whom I had gone with all my troubles and pleasures ever since I was a
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little child—Nell, who had been my sister and mother playfellow and counselor all in one—everything to me!

"Why did you look so at Nell?" I asked Allan, anxiously, later on in the evening, when we were alone. "You don't think there's anything the matter with her, do you?"

"Did I look so?" Allan answered, smiling. "Well, I don't think she looks very bright. Is there anything wrong?"

"If there is, it is all Philip Harvest's fault," I cried, energetically. "She has never been the same since their engagement was broken off. Dr. Craythorne, you don't believe in people dying of broken hearts, do you?" I went on, anxiously; and Allan smiled a little gravely as he answered:

"I don't think Nell will, at all events. She has more sense. Why was the engagement broken off? They seemed so fond of each other."

And then I looked up into Allan's calm, quiet face, and somehow found myself telling him all about it—about the invitation to the party, our empty purses, and the means we took to fill them, and about all the trouble that followed. I saw his hand go up once or twice to his moustache, to hide a smile, but I was too much in earnest to share his amusement.

"I promised Nell not to tell Philip," I said; "but, Dr. Craythorne, couldn't you make it all right?"

"I don't think that would be very honorable, would it?" Allan replied. "Your telling me that I might tell Philip seems much the same thing as telling him yourself. Perhaps it will all come right. I must say, I don't wonder Harvest was annoyed."

"But he ought to have believed Nell," I insisted. "If I cared for any one, nothing could make me think badly of them."

And then Allan said something which I cannot write down here—which I have never told to any one (not even to Nell), but which I shall never forget—never till the last day and hour of my life!

Ah, what a teasing I got from Jack that night! What a long talk we had over the fire about what they were pleased to call "my prospects!" How good Nell was to me, and how she stitched away at my *trousseau* during the next few months!

"It was fortunate I didn't mark any of the linen," she said to me one day, when I found her turning out the contents of a big box full of things she had prepared for her own wedding. "They will do so nicely for you. Now don't be silly, child," she went on, as I commenced a vehement remonstrance. "They are not mine, you know. And they will save a lot of time and expense, particularly as the wedding is to be so soon. Minnie, didn't you think Philip was looking very old and ill yesterday?" she went on, bending still lower over the box.

"Serves him right!" I answered, hotly.

We had met him only once or twice during the last few months, and on each occasion Nell and he had merely exchanged a quiet bow.

Miss Harvest called now and then, but Philip had never been in the house since that dreadful night in

February. I grew quite to dread Maria's visits, Nell always looked so white and worn afterwards. And indeed it was no wonder, for Miss Harvest, with the most wretched taste, talked of nothing but Philip—how his business was extending—how much Lord Tempest thought of him—how often he dined at the hall, and how much in love Miss So-and-so was with him.

"Dear me, how he must have altered!" I said, sarcastically, one night when she had been more than usually aggravating. "Fancy Philip turning out a flirt! I never thought him agreeable enough for that—but one never knows. And how old he is getting to look! I was quite surprised the other day. Still, he can't be so very young when one comes to think of it," I went on, innocently, well knowing Miss Harvest to be some years the elder of the two.

She was just drawing herself up and preparing for battle, when Nell gave me a warning look and rushed to the rescue. She was always scrupulously polite and civil to Miss Harvest, passing over her impertinent speeches with a certain calm dignity which almost removed the sting, while I always felt inclined to take her by the shoulders and put her out of the house, after hearing one of her covert sneers at Nell.

So the summer went on, and August came with its bright, hot days and fields of golden corn, and my wedding-day drew near. I could scarcely believe it even then. It seemed so unlikely that I—the youngest, who had always been the plaything of the house—should be the first to go out into the world, and gain a new home and new ties for myself. And then I was so very doubtful about my housekeeping capabilities. I knew from sad experience how particular men are about their food—what language Jack used to indulge in when the dinner was not to his liking! I had given up novel-reading for the last two months, and gone in for a course of cookery-books and Briton's *Domestic Management*. How savage Allan used to get when he came in of an evening and found me with a big book on my knee, and a bigger wrinkle in my forehead, plodding away—"as if one were a ghoul or a locust," he would say, indignantly flinging the book to the other end of the room!

Nell and I were sitting one morning, about a week before the time fixed for our wedding, in the breakfast-room, stitching away busily, when, rather to my surprise, the garden-gate opened, and Allan came up the walk. It was so unusual for him to call in the morning, and he looked so dreadfully solemn, that I felt sure something dreadful had happened.

"Allan, what is the matter?" I cried, running out into the passage to meet him.

"Hush, dear! Is Nell there?" he asked, eagerly. "There has been a railway accident, and Philip is among the injured; and he wants to see Nell."

"Is he very much hurt?" Nell's voice said quietly. She had followed me out of the room, and was standing with tightly-clasped hands and great anxious eyes. "I will get ready at once, Dr. Craythorne."

"I may go with her?" I whispered to Allan, who nodded hastily, as he answered:

"Yes, only be quick, dear. There is no time to lose."

I don't remember much of what followed in the next half hour. Somehow or other we got to Philip's house, and found ourselves in the room where he lay on the bed, white and still, with his head bound up, and all his healthy brown color faded into a ghastly gray. Miss Harvest was in the room, and she came up with great tears in her eyes and kissed Nell.

"He doesn't know any one now," she whispered, as Nell bent over the bed and laid her hand softly on his brow.

There was another doctor in the room, and Allan and he stood whispering together in a corner, while I knelt down on the floor and held Nell's hand in silence.

"If he moves, give him this," Allan said, after awhile. "I must go now; but I won't be long, dear." And then they both, accompanied by Miss Harvest, went out of the room.

"Nell, darling, don't look like that," I said, softly. "Speak to me!" But Nell never moved nor took her tearless eyes from Philip's face.

"It was my fault," I heard her murmur, hopelessly. "I might have told him once, and now he will never know."

Ah, that was the worst of it! He could never know! He was going away from her into the unknown land, into the terrible shadowy "Beyond," and he could never know what a mistake he had made—never know how he had wronged her, how true and constant was the heart he had thought so feeble and wavering! A little verse Nell used to sing sometimes seemed to ring in my ears as I knelt there in that terrible silence, and I felt, for the first time, how bitterly true it was—for I think in the lives of most women and men there is a moment when all would go smooth and even, if only the dead could know "when to come back and be forgiven." And I knew somehow that half the bitterness would be drained from Nell's cup if Philip could come back again—if it were only for ever so short a while—to forgive and to be forgiven.

Allan came in two or three times that afternoon, leant over the bed, and asked a few questions, with a face that grew graver and graver every time.

"He hasn't spoken, I suppose?" he said to Nell, who only shook her head in silence.

The long hours wore away, the shadows grew deep, and the sultry day faded into the sweet twilight; then all at once Philip opened his eyes and looked into Nell's face.

"What is it? Ah, I remember," he said, slowly, "that dreadful jolt, and then the crash! It is very good of you to come, Nell."

Nell raised his head, and gave him the medicine Allan handed.

"You must not talk much," she said, softly. "Only, Philip, tell me you believe me now—don't you, darling?"

"Yes, I believe you now," Philip answered, wearily. "I don't understand it, of course; but I believe

there was nothing wrong. Poor little Nell, I was very hard upon you!" he went on, touching her hair with his poor, weak fingers. And then, for the first time, the tears rushed into Nell's eyes, and she bent and kissed him passionately.

"Philip, stay with me!" she cried, though, even as she spoke, the gray, unconscious look was stealing over his face.

Allan came hastily forward.

"Lift his head, Nell. There, that is better," he said, cheerfully, as Philip opened his eyes again, and then, still holding Nell's hand, relapsed into his former state of half-sleep, half-unconsciousness.

A little later Allan sent me to bed, and tried in vain to persuade Nell to take some rest. She came during the night to my room, and lay down for a little while by my side, while I looked the question I dared not ask.

"Yes, he is alive," she said, wearily; "that is, if you can call it being alive—but he has not spoken again." And then she put her face close to mine, and kissed me tenderly. "Poor darling, it is hard on you—all this trouble coming just now!"

"O Nell, as if I thought or cared for that!" I cried. "As if I could think of anything but you just now! And, Nell, perhaps he will get better, after all!"

But Nell only shook her head hopelessly.

"Allan thinks not; there is some dreadful injury to the head," she said. "But, Minnie, it is not so bad as it was—he believes me, now!"

Two or three days passed away, and Philip still remained in the same state, neither much better nor worse, though, I think, we all grew more hopeful as the time went on and he still lingered.

"He is certainly stronger," Allan said, one night, as he felt Philip's feeble pulse. "I think we shall try that operation to-morrow, Nell, if he is no worse."

What a long, anxious day that "to-morrow" was! How thankful I felt when Nell came in to tell me that the operation was over, and that Philip had spoken quite rationally!

"They say all will go well now, if he has no relapse," Nell whispered, thankfully. "Minnie, I can scarcely believe it, after I had given up all hope."

But Nell grew to believe it very quickly, for Philip improved rapidly after that, though it was a long time before he was well again. I never quite understood about the operation. Allan declared, when I asked him, that he had taken Philip's brains out of his head, washed them in the hand-basin, and put them back again; but that, of course, was all nonsense. And I did not much care—it was so nice to see the color come back into my darling's face, and to see her brighten into her old merry self again.

Our wedding was put off, rather to Allan's disgust, though, I must say, he was very kind about it, and quite understood the impossibility of my leaving Nell just then. And we had not to wait very long—only till two months later than the time originally fixed, and then Philip was able to be present. He looked terribly white and changed, but very proud and happy, as he sat opposite to us at the breakfast-table,

with Nell by his side. I do not think he will ever doubt her again.

He was greatly ashamed of the "much ado about nothing" he had made when he came to hear the history of our first acquaintance with Mr. Poole. Poor Mr. Poole! I don't believe he was half so bad as people said. I know Dr. Thompson hears from him sometimes, and says he has quite turned over a new leaf, and is doing very well in Canada now. But Nell has never told Philip the meaning of that little scene in the conservatory, which Miss Harvest reported so vividly, nor repeated the words which preceded it. There are certain things which it seems profanity to speak of, even to those nearest and dearest to our hearts—words spoken now and then in our lives which remain forever a secret between Heaven and ourselves and one another; and I am quite sure that no one—not even Philip—will ever hear from Nell's lips how that reckless heart was moved and stirred, that wasted life purified and ennobled, through love for her.

NIGHT.

THE spangled curtains softly fall
From heaven's high and ebon hall;
And Night, the dreamy priestess, folds
Herself away—while Somnus holds
His sceptre darkly over all.

The Night descends from heaven, between
The star-wrought bars of mildest sheen;
O'er mountain, hill and low sweet vale—
Sublimely dark her garments trail,
And drop a slumbrous calm serene.

The moon swathed in her cradle, white
With clouds, lies dreaming of the Night;
And o'er that couch the tender stars
Cast woven nets and spectral bars,
To keep her bound in slumbers light.

A breathless calm wraps vale and height;
Low freighted with the plumes of Night,
Around us heavy hangs the air;
And darkness, like a nun at prayer,
Kneels meekly to the spheres of light.

CLARENCE H. URNER.

ELIGIBLE WIVES.—A competency is essential to happiness and to comfort. It is wise in a young man, in selecting a wife, not to be wholly indifferent to the consideration whether she has been brought up to save or to waste. A wise economy is much farther removed from meanness than that reckless extravagance which leaves nothing for oneself or anybody else. The love and poetry of the honey-moon are seldom long preserved without something in the locker. Mothers should teach and daughters should learn domestic economy. They ought to insist upon this as of the greatest importance.

FROM PIPSEY'S BASKET.

THE basket stands open beside me; fat letters and lean letters, old letters and late letters, letters full of moans and wails, and others brimful of fun and rejoicing, and good-will and sincere love, lie there in one nest from all parts of these United States. Some from New England, from offices with felicitous names, such as Steep Brook, Hazel Dell, River Side; while snugly as a span of little sleepers in a trundle-bed, beside them, from distant States, lie others, hailing from such places as sets me to wondering with delight—Reedy Ripple, Lone Pine, Sweet Air, Trailing Run, Waving Grass, Tom's Brook, Woodland Mills; and yet the deacon says I am old enough, and have lived long enough in this wonderful world of ours, to know that names are—only names after all.

Before I begin to write, I must put on a wide apron and attend to the making of the yeast. And now before I commence I want to tell you women how I manage. You make it once a week, or once in a fortnight, the most of you, and it consumes a good deal of time and attention. I write this the middle of March, and the last time I made fresh yeast was the middle of December. Now I learned by experimenting. This last year has been a year of thinking, and trying, and planning, and successful experiments, and you don't know how glad this knowledge I have gained does make me. We can manage the two hardest jobs in housework now—washing and baking—as easily as Rarey, the horse-tamer, could master a pair of vicious horses.

But women in general are so incredulous, so slow to believe anything that they don't know themselves to a certainty, that I don't want to thrust my experience into their faces and get nothing for my pains only a sullen rebuff. I would hesitate, only for one girl there in the little brown basket, whose beautifully-written, long letter is sad with the burden of one thought that runs through it all like a sombre thread in a glittering web: "How do you find time to read, and rest, and take walks, and sing, and play, and yet live on a farm, and go through the routine of housework that all women must perform?"

By systematic management one can, after awhile, drive the work, not let the work drive her. This may not apply to the sickly mother of a family of small children, whose circumstances are straightened and unfavorable.

But the yeast. I have taken the first step now since I began this article. I scalded a quart of flour in strong hop-tea, and when cool enough not to injure the yeast, I put in nearly a pint of it—the last in the bottom of the jug which was made three months ago. Less will do; but I wanted to wash and scald the jug, so I poured all of it out. I stand this in a moderately warm place, and allow it to rise slowly. By to-morrow morning it will have risen, and be as light as foam, though not at all white, because of the extract of the hops. Then I will wash, peel and grate six or eight good-sized potatoes, and boil them

in water enough, so that when cooked the mixture will resemble very thick starch. When lukewarm, I will pour into this the risen yeast. It should be about the consistency of thin batter. This must be thoroughly incorporated. Taste and see if the mixture is bitter; if not, boil a good handful of hops, and strain slowly into it, stirring all the time. If it is too thin now, add a little flour and a good pinch of salt. Some people put in sugar until the taste can be detected a little. Let this be in your large bread-pan—presuming you use a pan instead of a bread-bowl or wooden tray—preferable, because it is easily kept warm, and clean, and bright. Stand the yeast in the warmest corner of your pantry, where it can work leisurely, and not be overwatched and annoyed. When it rises pretty well up to the top, beat it back, and every time it comes up defiantly, as though it meant to run over the edges, beat it back again and again, until it partially subsides, and big bubbles of foam begin to break, and other bubbles whisper to it, and then go a-popping themselves. It is a sure thing now, and you may begin to congratulate yourself that for a good many weeks to come you will have the best spongy bread, nice biscuit, delicious rolls, tender buckwheat cakes, crisp corn-bread, puffy muffins, and yeast to give away to your less fortunate neighbors. Now get a sweet, clean stone jug—a new one, that has never held vinegar, molasses, syrup, stagnant water, or anything to leave a taint of uncleanness within. With a funnel or a pitcher you can get the yeast into the jug easily, but the handling will be very apt to put the mischief into it, and it will take a notion to rise and foam again; so when you put it in the cellar, stand it in a deep dish or a pan, uncorked. If you find it all right in twelve hours, you may venture to cork it loosely, and after awhile you may tighten the cork; put it in closely, but don't jar or shake the jug unnecessarily.

This is the formula I followed. I have made it three times, and had good success every time. Three months ago I made two gallon jugfuls, enough to last us all winter, and plenty for the neighbors; but every time we baked we saved a little lump of dough, when the last loaf was moulded, soaked it in tepid water and added it to the yeast. That helped to make it last longer, and required a smaller quantity out of the jug each week.

During the coming summer we will not venture to make more than one jugful at once.

The first time I made it I corked it up tight too soon, and did not think what the result would be until I found out by experience. As soon as I touched the cork, it flew out, and the contents spirted up and splashed my face, and hair, and dress, until I looked as though I'd been out in a snow-storm.

Now if you want to make a little good dry yeast, take out a cupful while it is in the fussy, foamy stage, and thicken it well with corn-meal; or, stir meal into it as long as it will take it all, then rub more meal into it with your hands; spread thinly, and dry in a moderately warm place; put in a close sack, and it will remain good for months.

Some women practice a plan that is very good. Frequently the bread rises quicker than at other times, smells good and yeasty, is peculiarly fine and spongy, and they take advantage of their "luck" and save a piece of the sponge, cut it up in small bits, rub meal into it, enough to absorb the outside moisture, and then dry them, and thus secure an extra quality of dry yeast.

One mistake we all make, I fear. On baking-day we wish to expedite the work, and stand the loaves about the stove to keep warm, and before we are aware of it, it really gets too warm and deadens the power of the yeast, and renders hard and tasteless the upper crust.

We all know that if we bake on washing-day, and are so pre-occupied with the washing that we let the bread almost take care of itself, it is generally a far better article than though we had cuddled it beside the stove, or on hot bricks, or under pillows, looking at it often and turning it round, and wondering what makes it so slow to-day.

In cold weather we did a large baking whenever a fine day came; not that we ate much fine flour bread, but it is not advisable to be clear out and have to depend on the village baker. We used more Graham bread than any other kind. It is so wholesome, and so easily made. I have frequently made and baked a nice large Graham gem after the meal was well on the way, and one of the girls setting the table. First, I would start a good fire, take a large quart bowl two-thirds full of buttermilk, put in an even teaspoonful of soda, sufficient salt, two eggs, a heaping tablespoonful of white sugar, and thicken into a moderately thick batter, with coarse Graham flour; pour it into a well-buttered large baking-pan, and in about ten or twelve minutes, if the fire was good, it would come out of the oven as light as a puff, crisp, and tender, and a pale-brown color. Cut it in checks like gingerbread, carrying the knife perpendicular, so as not to mangle, but cut smooth. This is deliciously wholesome, and with fruits, or fruit sauce, the system is kept in excellent tone, the brain clear, and no sense of burden in the stomach. It is good eaten cold.

You older readers will remember how I used to wish some of you could teach me to make good biscuits—not the kind that tasted of soda, or eggs, or butter, or lard, or like substantial victuals—and though I couldn't learn, I kept on trying, knowing that perseverance will conquer in the end. I can make them now, good ones, too, that never fail me—the kind that I am proud of, as far as the success of a housewife's skill makes her proud.

I use Horsford's Bread Preparation, an honest, pure and reliable powder, the invention of Prof. E. N. Horsford, of Harvard College. It makes excellent light bread, too, and is perfection itself, when used for cakes, dumplings, pot-pie and pastry. I think samples are sent by mail, by addressing Rumford's Chemical Works, Providence, R. I.—inclosing, say twenty cents—that will pay for samples enough to give a good test of its merits and to pay return postage. The proprietors have not established

agents in many of the States, yet—none in Ohio—but they are honest men, and will send your money's worth, and you will never regret making the acquaintance of such a friend as the Bread Preparation.

A good-sized loaf can be made up and baked inside of one hour. Such bread tastes more like the old salt-rising loaf that my mother used to make, than any other kind. I made a lot of mince-pies yesterday, and the crust is sweet and dainty, and not like any of the other kinds I ever tasted. A confirmed dyspeptic can partake of biscuit and pies made after this formula with impunity.

Let us have all the labor-savers and all the good inventions that we can gather about us. We will have more time, then, more leisure for recreation, and reading, and music, and the exercise of the social faculties. Overwork is a merciless task-mistress; it takes so much genial happiness out of the lives of women; it robs them of buoyancy of step and spirit, of the elasticity of frame, that should not go out with girlhood's gifts and graces, but should mature into sweet attractiveness and the rare charms of middle life.

Our old pastor visited us last week. I thought for awhile that the deacon would appropriate him entirely, and there I sat, locking and unlocking my fingers, and feeling my eyes widen, and twinkle, and darken, and yet not a word more than the merest monosyllable could I get the chance to utter. In an hour or two father began to wink long and rub his nose with his fist, like a little child does when it is sleepy.

After he had gone to bed the way was clear, and while the girls worked at the counterpane in the room adjoining, we visited. I didn't want to ask who was the father of Melchisedec, or what kind of a coat Jeroboam wore, but I wanted to talk about—guess what? Why, making soap! He knew all about it, and I wanted to know what he knew. How funny to talk to one's pastor about such a practical and worldly theme as the compounding of lye and grease into a first-rate article of soap, common or uncommon, or fine or not fine!

With all the Pottses labor is esteemed honorable, no matter how lowly it is, so I do believe I like my old pastor almost better than I did when he pounded the pulpit, and whooped out his seventhly and lastly, and sang sonorously the benediction hymn, "Old Hundred." How did he come to fill the pulpit in his best clerical black, and likewise to compound grease and alkalis in denim overalls? Circumstances over which he had no control made it necessary that he, the father, should look after the interests connected with the great manufactory for a brief season.

Now, I had stuffed fat Brahmas for his Sunday dinner many a time, and together we had gossiped after cozy teas in the deacon's dining-room, in the balmy summer evenings, for years, and I had no hesitancy whatever in asking him for all the information I desired. How rich his knowledge did make me! and, though I am not at liberty to "tell it all,"

I can inform the inquiring housewife in some ways that may interest and instruct her. I had studied out a compounding of ingredients that I felt sure would give a good article of soap, and when I told my old pastor how I was going to make some of the best soap any woman ever did make, he laughed, and said I had planned the putting together of all the detersive compounds known, except one, and that was benzine, the best of all. So when I make my new kind of soap I will add this last ingredient. He said my quantities were too large; that less of each would be better. He also told me that all kinds of soaps improved with age the same as does our home-made lye-soap; that when the reputation of any certain kind of soap was well established, the proprietors, unless they were very honest men, would begin to adulterate by adding quicklime. I was sorry to learn this, for the very excellent kind that we have been buying for years and using with the most gratifying results, we will be compelled to abandon. It is not what it was. Formerly it was so mild, and safe, and pure, that it even made a good tooth-wash and toilet-soap, and had no more taste of alkali than a cake of fine tallow; now it begins to eat the wristbands, unless the garments are immediately washed out and rinsed.

We women should investigate and see what our soaps are made of, and I believe by good, hard thinking and managing we could combine materials and make an honest, clean article that would exactly suit us. Let the base be old, mild soft-soap of our own compounding, for common household purposes; then for toilet, say pure mutton tallow, or cocoa, palm, glycerine or olive oil, with any detersives we prefer, in moderate quantities.

I often see women going about with their fingers tied up, and on inquiry am told that the skin was eaten off with the soap on washing-day. I tell them I'd go searching among the books a good while before I'd let my faithful hands be eaten by any villainous compound like such as one buys at the corner grocery at a venture. Then when I suggest that they try borax, ammonia, turpentine, benzine or any of these excellent detersives, the answer invariably is: "Maybe they'd be hard on the clothes." Heh!

Doctor used to affirm that of all things in this world, a cow was the stubbornest and most dogged, and tried his patience the sorest. He kept his cow a little distance out of town, and for exercise he drove her to and from the pasture, mornings and evenings. Why a cow, with her bland, meek, cow-y face, is a lady beside the woman who is too wise to learn.

I laughed at Lily the other day, when I was so pleased over my tests of Horsford's Bread Preparation. I said: "O Lily, the first time you are in Pottsville, do run in and tell poor Mrs. Marshall, and Lu Bennett, and the new landlady, and the grocer's mother, what a treasure we have found after this search of years!"

"No, I'll not do it, Pipsey," said she, as she watched the sweet yellow butter melt slowly in the puffy heart of her fourth biscuit. "You know how

it would be just as well as I do," and her gray eyes took on the glowing color of the blue down in the pretty chalice of the morning-glory bells. "Like enough Mrs. Marshall would say, 'Catch me trying any of these new-fangled fixings, when lard, and salt, and buttermilk make such good biscuit!' And Lu Bennett would say, 'Sure it's safe? Oh, I'd be afraid it would eat holes in Johnny's diaphragm, he is so tender, you know; or maybe it would make his teeth decay like.'"

There was a good deal of truth in her assertion. Women are content to plod on in the way their grandmothers went; afraid to invest seven dollars in a good washing-machine or wringer; afraid to go on a pleasant little journey of sight-seeing for fear the cars may run off the track; afraid to give of their means for fear an agent will get his hands on it; afraid to help in home or foreign missions; to send their children to an academy or college for fear they'll become proud or wicked; not willing to purchase books because they are not worth the price; not willing to pay a poor dressmaker for cutting, fitting and making a dress that would give her the appearance of a lady instead of a dowdy, because she knows she can do it better herself; and so on, indefinitely, until we begin to believe the doctor made a mistake, and meant—not a cow at all, but a woman.

With all the opportunities of this marvelous age in which we live, in the midst of a progress that makes us dizzy when we think and deliverate, we wonder that women are not wiser and better. In the broad light of the present, there can be no shackles that will bind us down effectually and securely. Homes, with all their cares; children, with all their charms and their faults and wants; society, with all its multiplicity of demands and needs; poverty, with its chains, and its stings, and its discouragements; even loss of health, and wealth, and character, cannot utterly shut one out from the blessed chances of growing wiser, and better, and more useful. The world is full of books, and in many of them, we know, are whole human lives poured out fully, and grandly, and lavishly for the good of those who may read. I marvel when I think of all that is contained, frequently, within the lids of a book. Why, who need say that they would rejoice were they friends with such and such an author! Take his best books—perhaps the book of his rare, ripe years—and you have him, the man, the best part of the immortal god-man; you can touch him, can hear him talk, can take him with you to the sunny bank, or the shady orchard, or the cool room, where you can lie and read leisurely, and doze with the open pages under your hands. How much better that, than the other and weaker half, who, mayhaps, smokes, or yawns, or has a very human side to his character, tells long stories, or hums impromptu tunes, or has habits that would belittle him to your fastidious and exacting taste.

The basket! Not a word from the basket!

PIPSISSEWAX POTTS.

THE WORD OF A WOMAN;
AND THE WAY SHE KEPT IT.*

BY VIRGINIA F. TOWNSEND.

CHAPTER XI.

ON that night when the fever mounted to Genevieve Weir's brain and goaded her to madness; when she hurried off to the sea to rest her tired brain in its cool depths—on that wild night, at Grayledge, the skies far inward were cloudless, and over the White Mountains, and the valleys at their feet the stars shone solemn and bright.

Here Royl Darrow had been for weeks, striving his best to drown harrowing memories, to forget the grief and disappointment which had fallen like a frost-blight into his young manhood. He had joined the party at the hotel, and tried to fling himself, heart and soul, into the gay summer-life there. Young girls, in their fresh bloom and charms, and in their gayest mood; "splendid young fellows"—as the world called them—from college and from travels, made up the party, which gave Royl the most hilarious of welcomes when he presented himself amongst them. Most of these young people were acquaintances of Royl's, and in the party were several of his old classmates, so that he was at home from the first. What a gay, varied, glowing life he and his companions had led for these last weeks! The world of sorrow, and travail, and toil seemed as remote from this careless, joyous existence as though it belonged to another planet! The days were the perfect days of the late midsummer. Blue, dreamy skies smiled over that beautiful country of grand mountains and green valleys, and solemn pine-woods over lovely little lochs and glancing streams, and over all the picturesque roads that wound through shadows and sunlight among this charming scenery. And, after all, Royl Darrow had found in the beauty and grandeur of the nature about him, the finest sympathy, the best soothing and tonic for heart and soul. The young, bright companionship had done something for him, too, on the surface. There was a great deal of hearty, healthy magnetism about this young fellow. From his boyhood his very presence had seemed to bring out the best, sunniest side of people. After he came, everybody looked to him as the life and centre of all the varied plans for pleasure and mirth which filled these days. And so Royl Darrow went boating and driving, and on all sorts of romantic excursions and rambles to which the perfect weather and the lovely scenery invited the young people, and he tramped, and fished, and hunted with his classmates; and, in all these ways he strove to forget the past, to put out of his heart the memory of the woman whose image still haunted him.

It could not be possible but he should succeed in some degree. With all well-balanced natures of men and women love is not wholly outside the will. Royl's

uncle had judged rightly, that no woman could wreck that healthy, elastic young manhood. It had too much force, too many fine powers not to recover itself in time. Life was too grand and rich a thing to go to wreck for Royl Darrow, because its best and dearest hope had betrayed him.

Yet, if he had followed the bent of his own inclinations at this crisis, he would not have gone to gay companionships, to mere pleasurable excitements, for solace and forgetfulness; much less would he have sought to set another woman on the empty throne of his heart; he would have flung all his energies into absorbing work of some sort all the better if he could have felt the work had in it some service of help and elevation for his kind.

There was, at bottom, a good deal of the stoic about this young fellow. He could have braced his soul by recalling to himself great men and noble deeds—men who, in the midst of suffering, grew strong and brave, and left their names a precious legacy to all ages. Their examples would have thrilled him—their heroism would have strengthened and exalted his mood. These were the great life-springs at which Royl Darrow's soul should have drank at this time. If he went to shallow streams instead, it was not his fault. His faith in himself had been terribly shaken, and partly in penance for his own folly, and partly in wrath and disgust that he should have been made such a miserable dupe, he was tempted to put all his future in his uncle's hands. Then his affection for the elder man, his desire to gratify him in a matter on which he had set his heart, all had a powerful influence with Royl at this juncture.

It must have been just about the time when Genevieve came out of the house, and started for the shore, that a couple of horses with their riders came thundering down through the mountain-road into the open space in front of the hotel, and wheeled up in handsome style at the piazza.

One of the riders was Royl Darrow; his companion was a rather tall and graceful woman, whose lithe, slender figure was well set off by a rich and artistic riding-suit. She was a perfect horse-woman. Two or three of the waiters hurried to doors and windows to see her as she sprang, with light ease, from her horse. She touched the steps swiftly and softly as a snow-flake. Then Royl said to her, with the familiarity of old acquaintance, and with the kindest interest in his voice: "Are you not tired, Ashley? Will you go in at once?"

The young girl thus addressed, with a willowy bend of her graceful person, swept the folds of her riding-dress over her arm, her laugh had a touch of mocking rillery in it, but it was a pleasant thing to hear, as she answered: "Tired, Royl! At this moment I can no more imagine such a feeling than Diana could when she came joyous from the hunt with her hounds leaping about her."

Royl laughed heartily. These bright replies, this sparkling humor of Ashley Brier's had always amused him, from the time when—far away in their

* Entered according to act of Congress, in the year 1878, by VIRGINIA F. TOWNSEND, in the Office of the Librarian of Congress, at Washington.

boyhood and girlhood—they had first known each other.

The two had set out in the early afternoon with a large party for a ride among the mountain-roads. The weather was enchanting. The air was a soft but stimulating tonic, scented with pines and birches. Everybody had had the gayest time imaginable. Royl and Ashley had ridden together. He always preferred her society—partly, perhaps, from old association—to that of any of her fair companions. And he was usually her cavalier in all their excursions. This was accepted, as a matter of course. The old friendship between the families was generally known, and hence Royl Darrow's coming to the mountains to join Ashley Brier created no special surprise. The young man had given himself up this afternoon to the spirit of the time—the fine air, the mad gallop among those glorious old roads had stimulated him like wine. Ashley was at the top of her bent, too, with the fun. She rode her own horse, a small, dun-colored, perfectly-built thorough-bred, and she had held herself abreast of Royl's big gray mare in all their mad races. They kept so far ahead that every little while the two had been obliged to stop and wait for the rest of the party to come up with them. At last, Royl, in the merriment of that passing mood, had suggested to his companion that they should strike off on another road, make a wide detour among the hills, and reach the hotel in time to welcome back the returning party, who would be sure to take a shorter cut by the valley-roads. Ashley fell joyfully in with the proposal. There was always something infectious in Royl's merriment, and his was now the reaction from all the pain and misery he had fought so long and manfully.

The lights from the wide hall streamed out on the piazza and fell on Ashley Brier, as she stood there, a moment, with the dark draperies of her riding-skirt gathered over her arm. The gray plumes of her hat shaded that fair face, all alive now with young bloom and mirth. It was a face as unlike Genevieve Weir's in form and expression as could be imagined. Yet it, too, was beautiful of its kind. Ashley Brier was a blonde; her complexion was the purest lily, touched with the softest rose. She had large, violet eyes, shaded by long, yellow-brown lashes; her hair was of that peculiar golden hue which is so rare, and which gives such a poetic setting to a face. In all this loveliness, skilled eyes might have detected some signs of constitutional delicacy, but no one would have thought of this as she stood there, with the glow from her recent ride in her cheeks, and the light of youth and mirth in her eye. No man could have failed to be impressed by the picture she made with the hall-lights streaming out on the fair face, the graceful figure.

"Will you walk awhile on the piazza, Ashley?" asked Royl. "Those demented young people may not be back for an hour yet; and I suppose they would not easily forgive us if we should go in and take supper without them."

"I thank you, Royl," Ashley replied. The two

had never dropped with each other the old, familiar names of their boyhood and girlhood. "I am not hungry, and a walk after our gallop would suit me best of anything."

He gave her his arm. Nearly all the guests were off on various excursions, and the great piazzas were quite deserted. The two walked around them in the summer-evening stillness. The hotel stood in the very heart of the mountains. All about them rose against the sky, in the soft starlight, those dark, mighty forms, their vast slopes covered with pines, their gray foreheads bared in solemn, eternal defiance to the sun and the storm.

"I have some news for you, Royl," said the lady, almost as soon as they began walking. "Good news, I am sure. But, then, I suspect you never hear any other."

Royl secretly winced at that. The light words had grazed the wound, whose quick throb of pain proved it still unhealed; but he answered calmly, not regarding the last part of the speech: "I am very curious to know what your good news can be, Ashley."

"I had a letter from papa just before we set out this afternoon. He and your Uncle Alvin are to start in company, to-morrow, for the mountains!"

"That is glorious news," answered Royl; and there was no mistaking his tone of surprise and pleasure. "A letter was brought me, also," he continued, "just as we started. I glanced at the address, and saw it was from uncle; but I could not wait at that moment to read it."

"That uncle of yours, Royl—that father of mine, are slightly fond of us two young people," said Ashley, in a tone half-gay, half-serious.

The speech rather surprised, and rather touched Royl. It was not just like the gay, sparkling girl who walked by his side. Greatly as he had admired Ashley, he had sometimes wondered how much real heart there was under all her scintillant talk, her brilliant loveliness. To-night—the old, galling doubt coming up again—he began to think he had done her injustice.

"If you and I are not spoiled, Ashley," he, too, answered, in a tone half-gay, half-serious, "I suspect it is not the fault of that brace of worthy gentlemen, who will be on their happy way to us to-morrow night!"

Again the lady laughed the laugh that was pleasant to hear—it rung so bright, it sounded so glad and gay, as though it might have burst from Titania's own merry circle of dancing fairies; but the next moment she spoke gravely again: "If your uncle had seen you where I did a couple of hours ago, that worthy gentleman, as you call him, would never have forgiven you. O Royl, it was cruel to frighten me so!"

"Forgive me, Ashley," said Royl, in a rather remorseful tone, "I did not mean to alarm you. There was probably no real danger, though I suppose it did seem rather frightful for a moment."

Royl alluded to a little adventure they had had on the ride home. At a point, where the road was

narrow, he had turned his horse aside to make room for Ashley's, and spurred his animal towards the edge of a beetling precipice on one side of him. It was a rather foolhardy act—one on which Royl would not have ventured in any mood but the wild, reckless spirit which possessed him. The two were on a high mountain, where the precipice on one side fell in a sheer descent of a hundred feet. Royl did not perceive his danger until he had reached the very edge of the cliff. A step more, and horse and rider would have gone over. He pulled the reins in with a jerk, but not until he had heard Ashley's shuddering outcry; and when he turned, he met her scared eyes, her face white with fear. On horseback, she was rather rashly brave herself, but this time it had taken several minutes to quiet her quivering nerves. Royl had soundly rated himself for giving the girl such an alarm.

"Frightful!" repeated Ashley. "I never had such a shock in my life, Royl! For a moment you hung there between heaven and earth, and it seemed as though you must go over." She shuddered as the dreadful picture came up to her again.

And again there came up to Royl the vision of the frightened face he had seen as he reined his horse round. He felt at the moment a glow of grateful tenderness towards the girl at his side, and on that sudden impulse he spoke.

"Would it really have been so very much to you, Ashley—beyond the first sudden shock and pain, of course—had I gone over the precipice?"

The tone, the question, made Ashley Brier's heart almost stop beating. Royl had never spoken to her like that before. She had coquetted, more or less, with a good many men. Royl Darrow was the only one for whom she had ever really cared. She admired him immensely. In her way, according to the measure of her heart and soul, she loved him. She discerned his vast superiority to all the young men who followed in her train and admired and flattered her. Then her long doubt respecting the nature of Royl's feelings towards herself had certainly intensified her liking for him. Royl Darrow had, altogether unconsciously, taken the surest way of winning Ashley Brier's heart. He had never given her any reason to suppose that she was more to him now than in the old, pleasant boy-and-girl intimacy. Beautiful and fascinating as Ashley Brier knew herself in the eyes of other men, here was one—the noblest of all—who had never succumbed to her spells. The thought stung the girl's self-love. The prize, so hard to win, became, for that very reason, doubly enhanced in value. Royl spoiled all other men's talk, all other men's attentions, for Ashley Brier. He formed her standard of splendid young manhood, and the lovers who sought her hand seemed, by contrast, clumsy, or vapid, or weak.

"That is a very strange question, Royl. Why do you ask it?" said Ashley, and there was a tremble—an honest tremble—in her voice.

Royl caught the sound. He laid his hand on the daintily-gauntleted one that rested on his arm.

"I should not have asked such a question without a motive," he said. "I should have been glad if you could have answered it in one way, Ashley."

"In what way, Royl?" she asked, breathlessly; but her heart was throbbing now, as no man's words had ever made Ashley Brier's heart throb before.

"I wish you could tell me that, had I gone over the precipice this afternoon, you would have missed something out of your heart and life—something which no other man could make up to you."

"If I had said it, it would only be the truth, Royl!"

The words were a little, fluttering whisper. They seemed to force themselves from the girl's heart to her lips. Under precisely such circumstances she had often carried herself with pretty affectations and feminine arts; but Royl's manner solemnized her; she never once thought of any rôle she had to play; her heart was in this matter; she was simple and serious as a child.

Royl caught, with bowed head, that fluttering whisper. He saw, too, the swift, shy glance of those violet eyes. He paused in his walk. They stood still together.

"Will you be my wife one of these days, Ashley?" he asked.

"Yes, Royl." She said it softly, but she said it steadily.

He leaned down and kissed the glowing cheek. He had won her without a single promise, without a solitary compliment or syllable of flattery.

In a moment, the sense of what he had just asked, and she had promised, came over her.

"O Royl, what have I said!" she cried out in the sudden tumult of her feelings. She could not have done it half so well had she been acting a part.

"You have said nothing that you shall ever repent, Ashley," said Royl, solemnly and tenderly, "if the care and devotion of my life can prevent it." And Royl was a man who would keep his word.

"Papa will be glad. You are the only man in the world to whom he would have given me, Royl!" said Ashley, a few moments later, when she had grown calmer under the great happiness that overmastered every other feeling.

Before Royl could answer, they heard the sound of horses' feet, of voices and laughter. Their party had returned. They must go out at once and join in the gay mirth that would be sure to greet them.

When he was alone that night, Royl felt glad at what he had done. Everything was settled now. He was calmer, and, on the whole, happier, than he had been for months. He thought tenderly of the beautiful girl who had so simply and generously given herself to him. He promised his own soul that he would spare no pains, no care, to make her life with his a happy one.

Did he contrast this summer night with the winter's last one? Beside this calm pleasure, this sense of relief and satisfaction, did there rise up any memory of the passionate emotion, the flood-tide of joy which had overswept his soul when the moon

looked down on him through the naked branches, and he had asked the woman, sitting by his side, the question he had asked Ashley Brier to-night? Did he remember the brown eyes lifted steadily to his, while their unutterable loveliness had shone into his heart? If such questions arose, Royl Darrow put them sternly away as intruders that had now no right to cross the threshold of his soul, no right to stand with questioning face at any door or window of his heart.

But Royl Darrow's deepest joy was the thought of the gladness that would shine in the eyes of the old man who was coming to him, when he learned what had happened that night.

CHAPTER XII.

IT was early autumn at Grayledge. The last month I had been one of terrible anxiety at the cottage. Genevieve had been very ill—so ill that, at times, they trembled for her life. But her fine constitution rallied at last, and carried her over the danger. It had been a hard battle, but youth and life won it in the end.

She sat this afternoon in her easy-chair by the window. It was the first time she had walked so far since her illness. It was a pitiful sight to see the pale, sharpened face resting against the cushions. Yet there was a hint of returning bloom about the cheeks, and the pale lips seemed to promise that their own rose-red would be back in a little while.

She sat silent, gazing for a long time out of the window on the wide, pleasant landscape which lay dreaming in the sunshine. The summer's perfect work was done now. Leaves and grass had ripened to their richest green; but as yet there was no hint of frost, no touch of decay anywhere. It was a very lovely world on which the dreamy, poetic light of that September afternoon was falling.

Mrs. Fairfax stole back so softly into the room that Genevieve did not hear her. She had left her niece alone for the last hour, thinking the quiet around her, and the lovely out-doors, might find their own way into the girl's soul, and do some work there that no human ministration could.

These last weeks had told very heavily on the poor lady herself. There were days and nights when she hardly allowed herself to leave Genevieve's bedside for a moment. Sometimes the girl had lain unconscious, sometimes the fever had mounted to her brain, and she had raved wildly. Yet her talk had been so incoherent that her aunt, her ears sharpened by grief and anxiety, had gained very little light on that secret beneath whose anguish Genevieve's reason had succumbed—a secret to which, it seemed, that her young life would be sacrificed.

In the midst of her wildest ravings, the girl would suddenly pause, as though some old memory pierced to the fever-maddened brain, she would close her parched lips, and a wary, guarded expression would settle on the sharpened face. "I have kept my promise—I have told nothing!" she would moan to

herself, in a voice that was pitiful to hear; and she would stare about her, with the bright, wild eyes full of terror, lest the secret she guarded in her madness had escaped her.

But that there was some secret, some awful wrong at bottom, Mrs. Fairfax needed not to be assured. She noticed that Royl Darrow's name and his Uncle Alvin's were often on Genevieve's lips. She remembered hearing her niece allude to both of these gentlemen as friends of her New York relatives; but as Genevieve often imagined herself in the great city, among the crowds of people she had met there, these names did not have any special significance for Mrs. Fairfax; and when Genevieve came out of the cloud of her fever, out from the dark, hushed borders of the grave, her aunt was still, as regarded the girl's secret, as much in the dark as ever.

"Genevieve!" said her aunt, softly.

The girl turned suddenly and looked at the lady. The new light of hope and courage was in the great brown eyes, which shone out of the sharpened face. She was like the old Genevieve Weir.

In a moment she spoke; the clear, sweet ring was in her voice once more: "Aunt, I am going to get well!"

"I know you are, my love. Oh, thank God!" said Mrs. Fairfax.

"This is a beautiful world, Aunt Esther!" continued the girl, and the flute-like sound held steadily through the tremulous tones. "I have been sitting here and seeing how fair it lies outside, how every quivering leaf, every ray of sunlight, welcomes me back to life and hope. It is no longer bare and dreary—it is a glorious world, and God over it is good! I am going to be what I was before—before—" The sudden hush which her aunt had learned to know so well came upon voice and face.

Mrs. Fairfax leaned over the girl. The time was come to speak at last.

"Before the trouble came upon you, you mean, Genevieve!" she said, solemnly.

A swift alarm flashed into the girl's eyes. The faint bloom faded in her cheeks.

"Did I say anything, Aunt Esther, when I was sick and wild, and didn't know—"

"My child, you said nothing." Mrs. Fairfax's answer broke in soothingly upon that sharp, distressed cry. "If you raved incoherently at times about people and things, nobody is the wiser. But I knew long before your illness that a terrible grief had come into your life, my darling. I could not speak first. I waited for you."

She waited again. But there was no answer. The still, resolute look had crept again upon Genevieve's white face. Her lips seemed locked together.

Mrs. Fairfax had been leaning over the girl's chair. She came now and took a seat by her side.

"Genevieve," she said, solemnly, "I promised your dead mother I would devote my widowed, childless life to the young children she left behind her. Have I not kept my promise?"

At that solemn appeal, Genevieve was silent a

moment or two, looking at her aunt. Mrs. Fairfax had been a beauty in her youth, and time and care had still left a fine and delicate face under the white hair. As Genevieve gazed, a new sense of all she and her young brother and sister owed the woman sitting there, came over her. Years of devotion, of uncomplaining sacrifices, of cares and economies carried, in silent patience, on Mrs. Fairfax's part, rose up to the girl. It seemed to Genevieve, now, that they had all been thoughtless and ungrateful. With all her fondness for her aunt, she had taken the un-failing love and care as commonplace things, that could never wear out, like the air and the sunlight.

"To what wreck would the helpless young family have come, if Mrs. Fairfax had not stood bravely at the helm? In all their poverty and straits the aunt had shielded her sister's brood from all coarse and harmful influences. A lady herself, her example had refined and moulded her young relatives. What an unspeakable debt they owed to her!"

These were some of the thoughts which, quickened and softened by all she had passed through, stirred now in Genevieve's soul. She leaned forward and stroked the gentle, motherly face.

"Aunt Esther," she said, fervently, "you are the best woman that ever lived! Our own dead mother could not have devoted her life to us more entirely than you have done!"

The tears shone in Mrs. Fairfax's soft, gray eyes.

"Then, my dear," she said, "have I no claim on you—no right to share your confidence? Will you not open your heart to me, Genevieve?"

The girl was silent a moment. All her heart drew her to answer that solemn appeal. For an instant she wavered. It would have been an immense relief to share her secret with another. Aunt Esther was a woman entirely trustworthy. But the memory of her promise rose up to Genevieve. Her conscience took up arms against her.

"What you say is true, Aunt Esther," she said, at last. *I have* had a terrible trouble. God only knows what it has been to me!" Her lips quivered a moment, but the next she continued: "There is nobody in the world to whom I would lay bare the truth so freely and so gladly as to you. Every feeling of my soul draws me to speak to you now. But this secret belongs to another. If I should reveal it, I should sin against my own soul. While I live, so help me God, I will not betray the one who trusted me!"

After this, there was no more to be said. If there had been any hope of moving Genevieve, Mrs. Fairfax was not the woman to urge her niece to violate her conscience. But her heart felt very bitterly toward the mysterious stranger who was at the bottom of all this misery. "Had he not broken her child's heart? Had he not brought her to the borders of the grave? Whatever his secrets were," Mrs. Fairfax reasoned, "he had no right to throw its dark burden on that young life!"

It was this feeling, uppermost in her mind, which made her say now, very solemnly and tenderly: "My

dear child, no man ever lived worth a woman's dying for him!"

"Perhaps you are right, Aunt Esther. I cannot tell!" answered Genevieve, slowly and sadly; but her face and voice brightened in a moment. "At any rate," she said, "I see, no woman has a right to die for love, for anything, so long as God gives her the courage to live." And, as she said these words, the old light shone in the eyes of Genevieve Weir.

This was substantially what Royl Darrow had been saying to himself so many times of late. At bottom the two were alike—alike in eternal sympathies, in aims and ideals. It was this likeness which each had instinctively recognized in the other, and which had drawn the soul of the man and woman so closely together. Each, too, had come to a solemn resolve to live bravely, worthily, so far as might be, happily, without the other. I think the highest love must always help one to do that.

The talk with her aunt had greatly tired Genevieve. She leaned her head back among the cushions, and soon fell into a sound slumber.

How pure, and pale, and child-like—how like a perfect cameo the profile looked against the dark, soft cushions. The shadowed lines, the unbent lips told their story of long struggles and bitter sufferings. But Mrs. Fairfax, as she gazed on the slumberer, felt the sweet face was thrilled with returning life and health.

Genevieve woke up that evening wonderfully brightened and refreshed. Rob and Gracie came in to see her, and were half beside themselves with delight at the change they beheld. In these last weeks of sorrow and fear the children had learned how their elder sister had been the light and joy of the household. The home had been a strange, solitary place to them while she lay up-stairs, sick almost to death, in her darkened chamber.

Rob, in his clumsy, boyish way, and half-ashamed of himself, tried to express his gladness at his sister's convalescence. "You'll get well, Genevieve, and be just the same dear old girl you used to be!"

"I mean to be, Rob, or something better than that," and as she said this, Genevieve ran her fingers through the damp rings of flaxen hair around the frank, sunburned forehead. This everyday home-love had had new meanings to Genevieve of late. It was very sweet to her now. Had it not once proved itself powerful enough to draw her back from the very arms of death?

"I don't want you to be any better," burst out Rob. "The old Genevieve is good enough for me!"

"And Rob and I are never going to be the bears we have been," said Gracie, very solemnly, as she brought the pretty pink-and-white face between her brother and sister. "You may be cross every day, Genevieve!"

"Why, how delightful, Gracie!" answered Genevieve, and there was a ring of her old merriment in her sudden laugh. It did them all good to hear it.

From that time Genevieve continued slowly, but steadily, to grow better.

CHAPTER XIII.

ONE evening, in the late autumn, Ashley Brier and her father were alone together. This was something unusual, for these were very busy, crowded days at the handsome house where the Briers lived. Their home commanded a fine view of Central Park, and was large and imposing outside, and elegant and luxurious within.

But, during the last weeks, there had been a constant bustle and excitement inside those stately walls. It was widely known now in fashionable circles that the only daughter of the house, the idol of her widowed father, the beautiful Ashley Brier, would be the wife of Royl Darrow before the early winter—now only two weeks off. The preparations for the approaching wedding were all of the most elegant kind.

"Do the thing up handsomely, Ashley," her father had said. "I shall never have another daughter for some handsome young scapegrace to walk coolly in and carry off before my very eyes."

"He is the only man in the world who could ever have succeeded in getting me away from you, papa," Ashley would reply, playfully patting her father's shoulders, and smiling glad and triumphant in his face.

"I can't perceive that that fact ought to make me feel any more cordial toward him!" the man would answer with a growl that could have deceived nobody.

Ashley knew perfectly that her father's pride, love, ambition, were all immensely gratified at this marriage of his daughter. From the time that Joseph Brier and Alvin Darrow had been classmates at college a warm friendliness had existed between the two. Yet they were very unlike in temperament and character, and the admiration had been chiefly on the side of Ashley's father. At college he had always regarded young Darrow as superior in all ways to the rest of his classmates, and this opinion had, in the course of a life-long intimacy, undergone no change.

Living in the same city, the two had always kept up their old college-acquaintance and reminiscences. From the time, too, that Royl came to his uncle's home he had been a great favorite with Mr. Brier. If there was much in the young man that must always remain a sealed book to the elder, he could appreciate to the full all those fine qualities on which the world sets so high a value. Royl Darrow was the only one of Ashley's suitors whom her father had ever regarded with any favor. Indeed, Joseph Brier, drawn at once to the bright, joyous boy, had thought of the possibility of this union long before it had entered the mind of any other person. As the two grew into manhood and womanhood, it became a favorite scheme of his; not the less so, because he at length became satisfied that Ashley's real preferences coincided with his own. But the friend of Ashley's girlhood did not, as was to be expected, develop easily and naturally into the lover. With the father, as with the daughter, this fact, no doubt, enhanced the value of the prize.

One man, the best and noblest, was not vanquished

by the power of Ashley's beauty, nor caught within the bright meshes of her charms. For the last year, however, Joseph Brier had his own reasons for believing that Alvin Darrow had set his heart on his nephew's marriage with Ashley. The two men had learned in the same hour, at the mountains, of the consummation of their dearest hopes.

Joseph Brier had strolled into his daughter's room that night partly for a little private talk, partly to please his eyes with the sight of her. The man liked to have her about him as much as possible these last days of her girlhood. For Ashley was very dear to him. His nature was not a large one, and his daughter was probably the only creature the man really loved in the world.

Joseph Brier was now approaching his seventies. He bore his years wonderfully well. He was a good-looking man, of middle height, and rather portly build. His features were large, his face was square, and his dark eyes had a shrewd twinkle in them, sometimes sharp and sometimes pleasant, for he enjoyed making a good bargain, or telling a good joke. His beard and hair were iron-gray, and the one grew round a resolute mouth, and the other covered a Roman-shaped head.

You would have known Joseph Brier anywhere for a prosperous business man; his prompt, resolute manner, his solid, self-satisfaction certified him perfectly. Yet, these things were not so salient as to prevent him from being a very agreeable companion. His college-life had given him a taste for books which he never lost.

But Alvin Darrow, the man of larger brain and finer nature, despite his terrible lapse, had measured his old college friend thoroughly. He knew that at bottom Joseph Brier was a hard, shrewd man of the world. He had no generous enthusiasms, no elevated standards. The gods his soul worshiped were success, wealth, popularity in one form or another. He probably had a higher regard for Alvin Darrow than he had for any man in the world; he would have been greatly shocked at the knowledge of his old friend's crime; yet, if the hour of discovery came, Joseph Brier was not a man to stand by his old classmate with help or pity. It was, indeed, likely that in the sudden recoil of his feelings, he would regard their long intimacy as a sort of reflection on his own integrity; and, to revenge himself, be one of the loudest in the outcry and the condemnation.

But, if Royl were once Joseph Brier's son-in-law, everything would be changed. Ashley's husband would be a part of the old man's self. His pride, his honor would be bound up with the Darrows'. Even if he were to know the worst, Royl's uncle believed the old man would sacrifice a part of his fortune to save them all from overwhelming disgrace.

Alvin Darrow trusted, however, that his old friend would never be put to this hard test; but, from every point of view, the marriage seemed the man's only salvation. From the happy hour, when at the mountains, he first learned of the engagement, he had done all that was in his power to promote a speedy union.

He was bent on securing that with a passion of eagerness which the young people little suspected. Every day he said to his secret soul: "My first free breath for years will be drawn when I hear the clergyman pronounce those two husband and wife!"

The room where the father and daughter sat together that evening was Ashley's own apartment. Laces, light and soft as summer mists—elegant costumes, some of them dainty and gossamer as the draperies of fairies, others of rich and splendid fabrics, strewn chairs and couches. Everything in that handsome chamber suggested a bridal-trousseau in an advanced state of preparation. Ashley's father looked around him with pleased, rather curious eyes.

"What mountains and miracles of finery!" he exclaimed. "My dear, have you the faintest idea what all this splendid nonsense is to cost?"

"Not the faintest, papa. You told me I was to get everything that I wanted, and I took you at your word."

"So I perceive, with a vengeance! What old fools you rattle-headed girls are always making of us gray-beards!"

"You forget, papa, to whom you are speaking," said Ashley, with her bright little laugh, and she pulled playfully the lobe of her father's right ear. "Week after next, I shall be something beside the rattle-headed girl you are always calling me. Wait and see with what grace and dignity I shall wear my new honors!"

This brightness of talk, this sunniness of temperament, was the great charm of Ashley Brier. It was a quality inherited from her mother, and it went deep with the daughter. In her happy, prosperous life, too, this native, bright humor was not contrasted with passionate tempers and moods of sullen gloom. It certainly was greatly to Ashley Brier's credit that no amount of petting and indulgence had quite spoiled her. If she was unconsciously selfish—if her own happiness was really the central thing in life to her, she was also impulsively kind and generous.

The woman whom Royl Darrow was so soon to take to wife, did not share his loftiest ideals, his noblest enthusiasms. Her standards were no more elevated than those of the refined circles in which she had always moved. She would have no fine sympathy with her husband's highest aspirations, his truest self. But she would be, for all that, a very graceful and agreeable companion. And I suppose that many a husband and wife manage to get on with moderate comfort together, even where one is conscious of a great world of thoughts and sentiments unshared by the other.

As she sat by her father that evening, the total lack of family likeness between the two was strikingly apparent. With her mother's disposition, Ashley had inherited also her mother's perfect features and dazzling complexion. Her father had always been haunted by a fear that Ashley had also inherited her mother's delicacy of constitution. But thus far she had given no signs of it; and that young, fresh bloom seemed the perfection of health.

"I have no doubt you will do the honey-moon programme handsomely," said the father, looking with proud eyes on his beautiful child. "Have you seen Royl to-day?"

"Yes; he was in for an hour this morning. Papa, do you know that your future son-in-law is a king among men?"

"If I thought otherwise, I should not dare to dispute it in this presence. I have not seen Royl to-day, but I have spent the best half of it with his uncle."

"What in the world were you talking about?"

"Business, my dear. Are you any the wiser now I have told you?"

"Hardly, papa. Business was always to me a perfect mystery and a horrible bore."

"That sounds very bright and epigrammatic, no doubt; but let me tell you, business, hard and shrewd, is at the bottom of all these dazzling dry goods!"

"Then I have more respect for it than I ever had before. But, papa, what in the world could you and Royl's uncle find to say for the best part of a day about business?"

"So much that, before we were through, I had placed at his command—at least so he could handle it if it were necessary—a hundred and fifty thousand dollars."

Even to Ashley's careless notions of money, those figures did sound formidable. She opened her violet eyes in surprise.

"How came you to do that, papa?" she said.

"I am rather astonished at it myself!" said Mr. Brier, gravely. "Really, Ashley, I never did anything in my life before—in a business way—about which I had any serious misgivings afterward. But I presume it will all come out right."

"But what did Royl's uncle want of all this money?" persisted Ashley, with rather unusual curiosity.

"My dear, your future uncle, my old classmate and I, have this day entered into a business partnership. The thing was substantially arranged between us while we were at the mountains, and you and Royl had other matters in hand. You wouldn't understand the details if I were to go into them, especially as your brain just now is full of all this wedding finery. But Darrow and I have put our heads together—they've proved pretty sagacious ones, I think—and gone into a Western land—and—mining—speculation; and I have furnished the bigger part of the capital. The thing promises well; but if your father has been caught napping, it will be the first time in his life, and it will be your fault, Ashley."

The girl's eyes opened wide at that.

"What can you mean, papa?" she asked.

"Strange as it may seem, it is the truth, Ashley. Perhaps I hardly realized it at the time; but I certainly should not, at my age, have put so big a slice of my capital into a single venture, had you not been on the point of becoming Mrs. Royl Darrow. The whole business transaction had a certain family air

about it which made it seem quite distinct from all other enterprises of this sort. It would not do to conduct one's business always on a purely domestic basis. My old friend's eloquence may have had something to do with the result; but, in one way or another, it was the thought of you, you young minx, which weighed down the scale."

"Make the most of your time—call me all the bad names you please, papa, until week after next," said Ashley, with her gay laugh. "I hope, however, you do not regret this business matter, if I am to be held responsible for it."

"N—o, I am not prepared to say I regret it," answered Mr. Brier, reflectively. "It is curious, though, that I can't get over Darrow's manner this afternoon."

"What do you mean, papa?" asked Ashley, with real interest in her voice.

"It all happened," continued her father, speaking half to himself, half to his daughter, "after the thing was settled, and I had put my name to the papers for that cool hundred and fifty thousand. Darrow was standing close to the office-table; he suddenly seized the papers, and then looked at me. His face was white as a dead man's, his eyes stared at me like a maniac's. I was terribly alarmed for a moment. I feared lest he should have a fit, or something of the sort. 'What is the matter, Darrow?' I asked, springing to my feet. He passed his hand slowly over his face. It shook like a leaf. He seemed to come slowly to himself. 'Nothing, Brier,' he said. 'I—didn't feel quite well for a moment. I'm better now.' In a little while he was talking and joking in his old fashion, only I could not get rid of a feeling all the while that the man was not quite his old self."

"I hope he was not ill," said Ashley, with real concern in her voice. "If anything were to happen to his uncle, it would be a terrible blow to Royl."

"Nonsense, child! Nothing is going to happen to him. The man is as sound as I am."

"Still, you do mean or think something, papa," persisted the girl.

"No, I shall permit myself in this case to think nothing," said Joseph Brier, very decidedly, yet again speaking rather to himself than to his daughter. "Had it been any other man than my old friend Alvin Darrow, who looked at me in the way he did after I had signed those papers this afternoon, I should imagine he was in some dire peril, and that at the last moment the money which I had pledged had lifted him out of his straits. By Jove! what a hunted look there was in the man's eyes!"

"Why, papa, are you turning grand romancer in your old age?" exclaimed Ashley, staring at her father, half-amused and half-amazed.

"If I am, my dear, it all comes from associating too much with romantic young people. As for the money, you and Royl will have it in the end, I suppose, so it all comes to pretty much the same thing. Among your husband's lucky stars, the least may not be that he had a rich father-in-law."

"Papa," exclaimed Ashley, with a little, half-

resentful tremor in her voice, "you know Royl Darrow never once thought of that! It would be impossible in his case."

"I will do the handsome young fellow the justice to say I believe it would," answered her father, thinking that, if money could have had any influence with Royl, he would have been an earlier suitor for his daughter's hand. But he kept that thought to himself, and went on: "As for Alvin Darrow, though I have no special knowledge of his affairs, I have always regarded him as a wealthy man. His style of living certainly would lead one to that conclusion, and he is the last man I should suspect of not keeping his expenses within his means. He has been for years the president of one of our oldest and soundest trust companies; he has a most enviable business reputation; his honor is unblemished. The notion that such a man can have any serious financial troubles is pure moonshine!"

"Of course it is, papa," said Ashley, energetically, and rather indignantly. Royl's uncle was so near to her now, that any reflection on him seemed to touch Royl and herself. "I admire Mr. Darrow immensely. If it were not for you and his nephew, I should insist there was not a man in the world to compare with him."

"I must tell Darrow of that the next time I see him," answered Mr. Brier, with an amused laugh at the bridling of that beautiful head. "But it is well, Ashley, that you made those two exceptions, else Royl and I might be jealous."

The instincts of the shrewd business man had not been at fault, but, for the first time in his life, Joseph Brier would not heed them.

The close of that day was the happiest of Alvin Darrow's life. He was a free man once more. It seemed to him that the reaction from the long strain which he had been through was more than soul or body could bear. The hour he had schemed, and toiled, and agonized for had come at last. Before the bank closed that night, the forged certificates were in his hands—in the fire. If you could have seen the look in the man's face as he watched the red flames curl around the papers! The proofs of his crime were all destroyed now. No eyes had ever detected it—no lips would ever whisper it.

Joseph Brier's signature had enabled his friend to take up the forged collaterals by placing at his control an amount which almost covered them.

The new enterprise in which the gentlemen had embarked promised well. Alvin Darrow would devote his whole energies, his large business experience and influence, to it. The principal management of the business was to be in his hands. He had his own plans for turning in the end to their mutual advantage the capital which Brier had placed at his command; but all the prizes of the world could not have again tempted Alvin Darrow into a crime.

The man had read his old friend thoroughly. At bottom, it was Ashley's engagement to the nephew which had saved the uncle. If Genevieve Weir had failed him, he must have been lost.

Yet, in that first hour of exultant freedom, Alvin Darrow hardly gave a thought to the young girl at Grayledge. As he rode up to his home that night, and looked in the faces of his fellow-men, it seemed to the calm, dignified gentleman that he could hardly refrain from bursting into a loud peen over his deliverance. He was going home, too, to look in Royl's eyes once more without a secret shiver of terror.

A month from the day on which Alvin Darrow had destroyed the forged collaterals, Genevieve Weir received a paper from New York. It was sent by some acquaintances she had made during her visit to the city.

She wondered afterward if she had any prescience of what was coming, as she tore away the wrapper of that special paper. Her gaze ran over the columns a moment, and was then arrested by some pencil-marks. A little later she had read the marriage of Royl Darrow to Ashley Brier, and a reporter's account of the grand wedding festivities.

Genevieve had been looking forward with long dread to this moment. She had known that, sooner or later, it must come. She had doubted how she should be able to bear it. She was surprised now to find herself so calm. Whether it was that her long suffering had left her at last without the power to feel acutely, she could not tell. But the certainty of Royl Darrow's marriage brought no sharp pain to Genevieve Weir. I think it was, in some sense, a relief to her. She had consummated her sacrifice. The figure of a young, fair woman stood now between the two. Only in another world could Royl Darrow know how Genevieve Weir had loved him—what she had suffered for him. She thought of her young lover with something of the solemn tenderness with which we remember our dead. She thought of his uncle, too—of his gray hairs that shone while he knelt to her—of the tears on his proud old face, and she thanked God that she had saved him.

While she was thinking of all these things, Mrs. Fairfax entered the room. Genevieve had so far recovered by this time that she seemed to pervade the household once more with her electric presence. She had returned, by degrees, to the old absorbing delight of sketching and painting. As she bent over her drawing; as she sat before her easel, lovely visions—landscapes of paradise, figures of unearthly beauty moved before her eyes, and her soul thrilled again with its inspirations, with the power and the joy of the artist.

In the twilight she sang the songs that Rob and Gracie loved—songs, light and sparkling as foam wreaths on summer waves. She had her gay moods at times, for they were part of her nature, and the dainty, delicious humor would play around her talk, and there would be smiles on her lips, and merry, flashing lights in her eyes. Plainly the old Genevieve was coming back to them. A stranger might not have seen any change in the girl, though to her

aunt it was evident enough. The paper lay open on Genevieve's lap. Mrs. Fairfax glanced at it.

"You have something from New York, I see, Genevieve," she said. "Is there any special news for you?"

The question took the girl completely by surprise, and she was naturally so honest that it did not occur to her that she could disguise the fact.

"The paper must have been sent to me because it contained an account of the marriage of Royl Darrow—Alvin Darrow's nephew—with Ashley Brier. They were friends of the Waldos. You must have heard me speak of them, Aunt Esther?"

There was not a ripple on her face, not a tremor in her voice. She almost wondered if it was herself that was speaking.

"I think I remember the gentlemen's names," said Mrs. Fairfax, but Genevieve's manner aroused no suspicion in her mind. "Did you ever see the lady?"

"No; she was to have been at one of the girl's receptions, a little while before I left, but something—I think it was the weather—prevented her coming."

"Of course, it was a marriage in high life, and everything went off in grand style?" said Mrs. Fairfax, with a little natural feminine curiosity.

"Yes," Genevieve might have said something further, but just then Rob burst into the room, with cheeks red as winter apples and bristling, flaxen hair.

"Isn't it glorious?" he shouted.

"What, Rob?" asked his aunt.

"Why, this snow! It has been at it steadily for the last two hours; and if it keeps on all night, we shall have splendid sleighing to-morrow. Tom Dayton has promised to let me have his sleigh, and I am going to take Genevieve out. She must just bundle up like a mummy, and the fresh air and the fine sleighing will make her as well as ever. Say you will go, Genevieve."

She looked at the boy's eager, beaming face. She could not find it in her heart to refuse him.

"Thank you, Rob. I think I will go," she said.

Then she rose up and went to the window. She gazed at the swift flakes as they came fluttering, wild and white, through the air. Rob kept on talking to both ladies with his loud, boyish, joyful adjectives about the snow; but his sister stood quite still, gazing out on the white, whirling wings of the snow-flakes. She was thinking of her drive in the last twilight of the winter, and of him who sat by her side! It was less than a year ago, and yet it seemed longer than all her life before!

CHAPTER XIV.

MORE than seven years had passed. In the pleasant June weather Jack Waldo came to see his relatives at Grayledge. He had spent most of the time in German universities and in traveling on the continent. Both of his sisters had married abroad, and their parents had continued to reside there. Mr. Waldo had not been well these last years, and only occasionally made a brief visit to America on busi-

ness. Genevieve had not met any member of her uncle's family since they parted in New York, though her cousins kept up an intermittent correspondence with her. But in their gay, crowded life, it could not be expected they would find much time to think about their young cousin.

Genevieve would not have known Jack at their first meeting. The dark, slender boy had grown into a rather tall, broad-shouldered, strong-limbed youth. His black eyes were as bright and merry as ever; his dark beard was very becoming. He had come out of his delicate boyhood into fine-looking, vigorous manhood.

Genevieve was overjoyed to see her cousin. With his smile, with his first words, she knew that the heart of the frank, generous boy had come back to her.

After the first cousinly embrace, he drew back a step, and still holding her hand in both of his own, gazed at her a moment with his bright, penetrating eyes.

"The years have been doing their loveliest work with you, my Cousin Genevieve!" he said. "I used to think you were one of nature's perfect things—like her lilies and roses, to which it would be impossible to add another grace or charm. I see, now, I was mistaken."

Genevieve laughed her gayest. "Ah, Jack!" she said, "you must have learned such honeyed compliments in another tongue than your vernacular. The brave, frank boy I used to know never paid me such flattery as that."

"But he never said anything to you more simply, absolutely true," replied Jack, gazing on her still with admiring eyes.

They sat down together in the little cottage-parlor. It was a pleasant place to talk in, with its cool, summer-matting, its light lounges and chairs, its pictures and engravings on the gray-tinted walls. There was nothing expensive anywhere, yet you could never have doubted for a moment that people of cultivated tastes and innate refinement dwelt here.

Jack began the talk: "My dear, I announce to you the important fact that your eldest cousin, Maude, has married a German baron! You actually have a cousin with a title—allied to some of the oldest nobility of Europe! Do you not feel the reflected honor of that relation?"

"I will try to feel whatever is proper under the circumstances," answered Genevieve. "But my first emotion is one of pure and simple amazement. Is your noble brother-in-law old or young?"

"I should imagine he was neither precisely the one nor the other," replied Jack. "He owns a ruinous old chateau, with some hunting-grounds around it. His manners show that he has all his life breathed the air of courts. You could never doubt his pedigree after seeing him bow to a lady. His delighted father-in-law has the honor of supporting him for his manners and his title; though that last fact, I, for very evident reasons, never repeat outside the family."

It was impossible not to laugh at Jack's talk. After

awhile, however, the conversation settled into a somewhat graver mood, though the native humor of one or the other of the cousins was sure to flash out every little while.

Jack's visit at Grayledge was confined to three or four days. During this time he and Genevieve were almost constantly together. The young man had come to America to transact some business for his father, and it was important he should return before midsummer. But the cousins made the most of their time.

They had few interruptions. Rob had gone to the Adirondacks with a party of young fellows who were bent on trying what there was in a month of camp-life and canoes, in catching trout and shooting bears.

Gracie was away, too. She was spending a fortnight with some friends in Massachusetts. Genevieve lamented the absence of the two a good deal. She wanted to present the big brother and the pretty young sister to their cousin. But Jack hardly shared her regrets.

In these days, all his old boyish admiration for Genevieve returned in heightened degree. Since they parted, he had, of course, seen many charming women of both hemispheres. But he still found no reason to alter his boyish estimate of Genevieve Weir. He had come back to find her still, in his regard, the consummate flower of her sex. It was certainly true that the girl, with her striking face and her subtle charm, had developed into a woman of rare loveliness. It seemed as though the soul had entered more and more into possession of every feature, had touched and moulded every lineament into a subtler likeness of itself. She had changed a good deal these years, and yet she hardly looked older. Every change in some fine, perfect way had been for the better.

She had not been unhappy these years. Indeed, it would not have been possible for that bright, wholesome, elastic nature to be permanently unhappy. Her own soul was too full of life—the world lay too rich and varied about her, for Genevieve Weir to have any abiding misery. Yet she never forgot for a moment all she had lost. She knew that for a little while the best had shone upon her and then vanished. No man crossed her path who could, in her thoughts, hold a comparison with the lover of her youth. Had Royl Darrow been a lighter or smaller nature, she would have outgrown the memory of him as her womanhood matured and her character and ideals changed; but brief as had been their acquaintance, young as were both at the time of their betrothal, the love which had drawn them together had been one of the eternal things. It was a part of Genevieve's own soul. It could know no change nor death.

She was very human—this woman of whom I write. She was not always happy, not always brave and strong. She had moods when a great darkness settled upon her soul, when her fate seemed exceptionally bitter and cruel, when her heart cried out and refused to be comforted for her love. At these times she would wonder why other women should

have the blessedness of home, the sweetness of companionship, the shelter which comes of a man's strong arm, and stout heart, and steadfast brain, while these were all denied to her. Sometimes the road of her life stretched up the future years, long and desolate as it had stretched that midnight when she paced her chamber, and slowly came to the resolve which had shaped her life.

Her heart was a woman's. Indeed, Genevieve Weir was a woman in every fibre of her nature. She was made to be the wife of some noble man, as truly as Shakespeare's loftiest, sweetest heroines, made to be alike his richest blessing, his deepest joy. To such a man, her daily companionship, her fine intellectual sympathies, the grace and variety of her mental gifts, must have been a perpetual stimulus, a spring of unfailing inspiration. Her soul would not have been weak when he needed its strength, her heart would not have proved afraid or shallow when grief or disappointment came to him; her daily presence must have ennobled and expanded his life. Therefore it was that the heart of Genevieve Weir was sometimes desolate, and ached with a mighty ache within her. There were long seasons when she dared not enter the shadows of the pine grove, dared not approach the old tree where she had parted with Alvin Darrow, lest the memory of that morning should rise up with the old suffocating anguish.

But Genevieve Weir had other moods—glad, exalted moods, when her soul was brave and strong—moods when the glory of the world and all vast, beautiful meanings of life were revealed to her—moods when the past held no pain, and the future no longings for her.

In some of these moods, when she was her truest, highest self, she had gone to the pine-tree, and kneeling in its solemn shadows, as at an altar, she had thanked God she had not failed when the test came, that she had surrendered her dearest life, silently, absolutely.

More than this, she had grown, after a time, to think kindly, almost tenderly, of Royl Darrow's wife. She could pray God that the woman who had taken her place in his heart and life might be to him his dearest blessing, his comfort and the crown of his joy.

Genevieve had at last grown to face with calmness the thought which had always cost her the keenest of her pangs—that Royl Darrow could never know the truth in this world, that he must always believe her false and perjured to the core. Yet Genevieve never doubted that in another world he would know the truth. When her life and soul were laid bare to his, he would justify, he would approve what she had done. Because her life here was so far a defeat and loss, that other world lying just beyond the dark gates of the grave had become very close, very real to Genevieve Weir.

Yet there was nothing in this young, lovely woman which suggested, even to those who knew her best, a life-long disappointment. On the contrary, one seeing her would have imagined that no sorrow

worth the naming had ever thrown its shadow on that young, bright face.

Genevieve Weir's days were full of the happiest interests, the most healthful activities. Of course her life at Grayledge seemed a very narrow, limited one when she contrasted it with the surroundings and opportunities, the foreign travel and social culture that would have fallen to her lot as Royl Darrow's wife. A soul so athirst for all knowledge, so alive to all that would enrich and enlarge it, could not fail to realize keenly the meaning of all it had lost.

But on her recovery from her long illness, Genevieve had showed the stuff she was made of by the way she threw herself, heart and soul, into work. She had cultivated her native powers with the patient, loving spirit of the true artist. She had done some beautiful work in drawings and landscapes. These had brought her name into wide notice, and added more or less to the straightened resources of the household.

On the whole, though there had been no golden shower of prosperity at any time, the family fortunes had been improving these years. Mrs. Fairfax, who was at the head of domestic affairs, had the New England woman's gift of management. It was astonishing how she carried that young family through, year after year, in comfort and refinement, on an income which would have seemed sordid poverty to many people. It is true the quiet little town on the sound-shore was an inexpensive place, and the gray cottage was sometimes opened in the summer to a few boarders. Genevieve's taste had added upper balconies and side piazzas to the house. In was an odd, picturesque, restful little home. The cool grays showed lovely against the blaze of summer blooms at their feet. Every day during the warm season, when Grayledge was full of strangers, people would stop in passing to admire the dainty little home.

One day, too, the Weirs had a small windfall. Genevieve had been looking over some old papers in her father's great mahogany secretaire, when she came on the title-deeds to some land he had purchased a little while before his death. He had never alluded to the matter, not regarding it of much consequence; but the land, lying on the outskirts of the town, had since risen in value, and its sale enabled Genevieve to carry out the darling wish of her heart, and send Rob to college.

Young Weir was now nearly twenty, and a sophomore. He was a bright fellow, full of high spirit and promise. He had shot up from his homely, red-cheeked boyhood into a manly, broad-chested youth. He had a fine, intelligent face, and his bristling, flaxen hair had softened and darkened, until some rather sentimental young ladies at Grayledge insisted, when the young fellow came home at vacation, that he had the real Apollo locks.

There was not the faintest family likeness between the sisters. Grace was almost eighteen now. She was exceedingly pretty. Just such fair, blossomy faces, with just such sparkling blue eyes and rosy lips, must have fluttered amid the fresh garlands and the

gay dances around the English May-poles two centuries ago. Grace was a bright, piquant, warm-hearted creature, a little petted and spoiled now, as always.

Genevieve had seen something of the world in these years. She had been to the mountains and to watering-places, as well as to great cities.

If the young, fresh girl had, on her first visit to New York, attracted so much attention, the lovely, gifted woman could not fail to inspire a wider interest. She had many friends among both sexes. Indeed, she was rather surfeited with admiration and compliments. She knew that she was beautiful. She would have been more or less than woman if she had not rejoiced in the knowledge. But, in her inmost soul she had a feeling that the best of life had gone by her, even if much still remained to gladden and enrich it.

It was impossible that she should not sometimes compare the men with whom she was thrown with the one she had loved. Perhaps Genevieve never said the words to herself, but the comparison was sure to result in the feeling which made Hamlet say of his father:

"He was a man, take him for all in all;
I shall not look upon his like again."

Jack Waldo had been two days at Grayledge. The cousins had found enough talking to fill up every moment thus far. The second afternoon, however, there came a long pause. When Genevieve looked up at last, she found Jack's black eyes gazing at her intently, with something in them which no single word could express.

She spoke on the impulse: "Jack, dear, what are you thinking about?"

"Forgive me, Genevieve," he said, gravely, tenderly, "I was thinking that seven years ago, when we parted that day at the depot, I did not expect to return and find you—Genevieve Weir again!"

Her face flushed at this speech. It was the first allusion he had made to the past. In the few letters that had passed between them, Genevieve had never mentioned Royl Darrow's name.

Jack Waldo was the only one who had ever known of her engagement. He had kept her secret perfectly. Genevieve remembered that, as she looked at him now with grateful eyes. The scene that Jack had witnessed in the ante-room of the library rose up to both. Each knew what was in the thoughts of the other.

"Jack," said Genevieve, softly and solemnly, "you will never see me anything but Genevieve Weir!"

Jack laid his hand on his cousin's. "I want to ask you a question, Genevieve. May I?"

"Ask anything you like, Jack."

"Why are you not to-day the wife of Royl Darrow?"

Her eyes, gazing steadily at him, did not falter—the flush did not deepen in her cheek; but the lips settled into a resolute line. A look of almost solemn sternness came upon her face.

"Jack," said Genevieve, and her voice had a tone

new to the listener's ears, "you alone, of all the world, have a right to ask me that question. If I could answer you, I would."

"But, consider—I have some right to know," persisted Jack, with a steadiness that almost matched her own. "I heard Royl Darrow call you his betrothed—I heard you give yourself to him, in what seemed then to me the most beautiful words that woman had ever spoken to man! All these years I have kept your secret. Can you fear to trust me now?"

Genevieve was silent a moment. "It would be such a relief, such a comfort," she thought, to unburden heart and soul to her cousin. "He had shared her young secret all these years, and held it sacred. He had seen the happy opening act. Why should he not know how the sad drama had closed?"

Jack Waldo, watching his cousin's face, knew the instant of wavering, the swift resolve that followed. Here again, as long years before, with her aunt, the girl's fine conscience, her high instincts of honor sealed her lips. Alvin Darrow had, it is true, exacted no promise from her. He had trusted his secret to her honor. That should be enough.

"Jack," said Genevieve, looking into his eyes with her own a little brighter and wider than usual, "it is impossible. I cannot, dare not speak what, so far as I am personally concerned, I should be ready, yes, unspeakably glad to tell you. But the secret of another is not my own. Suffice it—something happened that—that came between us, and makes me sitting here to-day what I shall be all my life—Genevieve Weir!"

"It hurts me to hear you say that, Genevieve. It makes me feel very bitterly towards one I long ago believed the most noble and loyal of men."

Jack had a secret motive in saying these last words. He felt that his cousin's manner would help him to solve the most mysterious problem of all in this broken engagement, and that was Royl Darrow's share in it. He did not have to wait an instant. Genevieve understood the implication. A light, like the sunrise, came into her face. The lovely eyes gazed, proud and triumphant, into Jack's.

"Your boyish instinct was true," she said, and there was a glad absoluteness in the ring of her voice, in the poise of her head, "Royl Darrow was everything you believed him. No shadow of blame lies at his door. He is no more responsible for what I am to-day than you are yourself, Jack Waldo!"

When she had said this, Jack knew that she loved Royl Darrow still, as she had loved him that day when he saw them come out from the library together.

"I have been doing him a long and cruel injustice, Genevieve," he said. "How could I help it when I learned who was his wife? I protest there were years when I could never think of the fellow without wanting to shoot him. Could nothing have been done to avert this separation?" he concluded, abruptly.

"Nothing, Jack," answered Genevieve, steadily, but mournfully. "I did what I believed was the will of God!"

"What you would do again, if you had the same circumstances to live over? Forgive me, Genevieve! This is the last question I shall ask you."

What a solemn loveliness came over Genevieve's face! What a splendor shone in her eyes! It was the moment of all moments in her life, Jack Waldo thought, which a great artist would have seized to paint her. Transferred at that instant to his canvas, the real woman must have shone there beautiful and immortal.

"I have nothing to repent, Jack," said Genevieve, and her voice had the clear, flute-like sweetness it took, when deep emotions swayed her. "If I had it all to live over again, I would do again what I once did—so help me God, I would do it again!"

Jack was silent for awhile after that. "There must have been some of the devil's own work at bottom of all this!" he said to himself. "Both Royl Darrow and Genevieve Weir—the two finest, noblest souls of man and woman he had ever known—were the victims of some terrible wrong! But it was useless to try and solve this dark mystery."

Genevieve's thoughts had gone far away from Jack. His voice suddenly recalled her.

"I met Royl Darrow last autumn," he said.

At that she started and quivered all over. The clear olive skin flushed with surprise and eagerness.

"Where?" she asked.

"In Paris, at the Louvre. It all happened very curiously. I had strolled in there all alone, to have an hour with some of my favorite pictures."

"Tell me about it, Jack," said Genevieve, softly.

"I came suddenly on a face, by Rubens. I must have passed it a dozen times before without noticing it. But, this morning it fascinated me at once. That portrait had a wonderful resemblance to you, Genevieve!"

"To me?" echoed Genevieve.

"Yes; the likeness was subtle, elusive, yet most certainly it was there. It was the face of a young, beautiful woman, who looked as though she had all her life dwelt in palaces and breathed the air of courts. About her head was gathered some soft cloud-like draperies. They surrounded her face like a lovely nimbus. Perhaps it was the pose of the head which suggested you; perhaps it was the oval cast of the features, or the lights in the great brown eyes. I stood there some time, trying to make out in what the likeness consisted. I was quite lost to everything else, when a lady's voice close behind me said, in a bright, amused tone, 'Why, Royl, that picture seems to have had the effect on you of some beautiful Medusa! Are you really turned to stone?'"

"I turned on hearing that. Just behind me stood a gentleman with a rather tall and very beautiful woman on his arm. I had not seen Royl Darrow since he parted with you that day in the little room by the library; but I knew him instantly."

"I had thought of him for years only with towering rage or supreme contempt; and if, as I now am glad to believe, my feeling did him injustice, you will see how impossible it was for me—knowing what I

did—to have any other; but I was so immensely taken by surprise, that I spoke out involuntarily, 'Royl Darrow!'"

"He stared at me in turn a good deal dazed. Of course, there was nothing in my present size and stout muscles to remind him of the dark-skinned, hatchet-faced stripling he used to know. The lady stared, too. There was nothing to do, then, but introduce myself."

"Young Darrow seemed very glad to meet me. He introduced me to his wife. That did not make me feel any more cordial toward him. I felt like saying to him, as he stood there with that lovely lady by his side, 'You had no right to make this woman your wife!'"

"You dear Jack!" said Genevieve, thinking what an honest, loyal heart the young fellow had.

"We talked a little while," resumed Jack, "as fellow-countrymen with a good many mutual acquaintances would be likely to. I learned that his father-in-law was not well, and for that reason they had all lived abroad for the most part during these last years. Alvin Darrow—Royl's uncle, of whom you must have heard—had come over the summer before, and joined Mr. Brier, and the gentlemen were at that time in the north of Italy. They were to join the young people in a few weeks, and the whole party were to winter somewhere in the south of France."

"As he talked, he seemed perfectly like the old Royl Darrow. I found it difficult to keep my resentment toward him at white-heat. Perhaps it was for that very cause that I said, after I had, in turn, imparted a brief chapter of family history, 'That Rubens is a very striking picture.'

"'It has acted like a spell upon my husband,' said Mrs. Darrow, smiling very graciously. 'I am glad you spoke and broke the fatal charm, Mr. Waldo.'

"I was not in the mood for making polite speeches, so I only bowed at the lady's remark, and inquired: 'Does that portrait remind you, Darrow, of any face you have ever met before?'"

"I confess, Genevieve, that a little malice lurked at the bottom of that question!"

If she smiled at that the least in the world she did not speak. Perhaps she could not trust her voice, but she drank in every word with parted lips and face of intent eagerness.

Jack continued: "Royl Darrow replied, 'I should like to have you answer that question, Waldo.'

"'It struck me at the first glance,' I said, 'as looking wonderfully like my cousin, Miss Genevieve Weir. I have been trying to find out in what the likeness consists, but thus far it baffles me. You met the young lady, I am certain, when she visited us in New York?'"

"'I remember her perfectly,' he answered, quietly. 'I think with you, that the likeness is very striking, though I am a little puzzled to tell in just what it consists.'

"Mrs. Darrow listened to our talk in smiling silence. I saw that she turned now and gazed with some fresh interest at the picture."

"In a moment, Royl Darrow spoke again. 'I suppose you hear sometimes from your cousin, Waldo?'"

"Yes; my sisters have letters occasionally. She is still living at Grayledge," I answered, a good deal puzzled by his manner. How could the scamp he had proved himself look at me with those honest eyes!

"The subject evidently had an interest for him. 'I have never heard the name of the gentleman Miss Weir married,' he said.

"You are not singular there.' And I believe I spoke very calmly, though I was certainly amazed. 'Nobody has ever heard his name.'

"I do not understand you,' he said, trying to read my face.

"Is it possible,' I answered, 'that you did not know my Cousin Genevieve Weir had never married?'"

"It seemed to me I could feel him start. 'Not married!' he repeated; and he stared at me with those clear, gray eyes; but there was no hint of remorse, no self-humiliation, no conscience-stricken memory in Royl Darrow's look. I watched him keenly. 'Not married!' he repeated again, half to me, half to himself.

"Certainly not, at her last writing, two months ago,' I repeated, and I was provoked to find my feeling softening towards him. 'You seem greatly surprised, Darrow?'"

"I confess I am, Waldo,' he answered, still with the dazed look. 'I supposed—I took it for granted—that your cousin was married within a year after her visit to New York.'

"Lovely ladies do not invariably condescend to take husbands,' I said, with a glance at Mrs. Darrow. I owed her that little gallant speech, though it cost me an effort to make it."

"Have you told me all, Jack?" asked Genevieve, as he paused.

"Everything. Some acquaintances of the Darrows came along and broke up the interview. Royl was most friendly to the last. He gave me his card, and invited me to call on them."

"You never did so?"

"No. I could not bring myself to do that, for your sake, Genevieve. But in the course of the next fortnight, I learned that the Darrows had suddenly left Paris. Mr. Brier had been taken seriously ill, and they had gone to him. He died not long afterward."

"He must have died," Genevieve thought, "without knowing how he had saved Alvin Darrow's honor."

Jack had watched his cousin intently while he had been talking. She sat still as the sphinx. Her very soul seemed to listen. Swift flushes came into her cheeks, and then left them pale as marble. But her silence, her breathless, parted lips, had to Jack a pathos deeper than any words.

In the stillness that came afterward, the young fellow rose and walked two or three times across the room. Genevieve followed him with dreamy eyes;

he was not sure even that they saw him. At last he came and stood still before her. The merry black eyes looked at her gravely.

"Genevieve," he said, "I wish all this had been different. I am not curious to know your secret. I only see that the devil got his hand into things, and spoiled them somehow. He has a large share in the management of affairs on this planet."

"Yes. I think he has," answered Genevieve, gravely, too. "But in the long run, God will have the larger. Don't ever doubt that, Jack."

"I will try not to. But I cannot bear to think, Genevieve, you are to live through all your womanhood—down into old age—alone. It seems in your case an awful mistake, a dreadful defeat of original designs and purposes."

She flashed up at him then with her native merri-ment.

"Does my fate seem such a dismal doom to you, Jack? Is there no purpose, no happiness for a woman in life outside of matrimony?"

"God forbid I should every hold that creed, Genevieve! But you are a woman, made to be the crowning joy, the deepest blessedness of a man's life. Think what your tenderness, your companionship, your very presence, must be in his home. Yet how very few men are worthy of such a woman as you are! I thought you had chosen the one man in the world who was."

"Dear Jack!" said Genevieve again, and the tears shone in her radiant eyes. But in a moment she added, with solemn earnestness: "I have never regretted my choice. Thank God that sharpest misery has been spared me! What my youth loved, what it believed in, never disappointed me. How many women have married men, fondly believing them their ideals of manly strength, and tenderness, and loyalty, and are undeceived at last! How many marriages that promised fair as the summer-dawn ripen into the perfect day, how many bonds gall, how many unions prove unwise, unfit, poor or commonplace! Why, Jack," she concluded, "solemnly as I believe in that God-ordained, dual-life of man and woman, I am blessed above most of my sex for all—for all!" Her voice dropped over those last words.

Jack gazed at her in admiring silence for a moment.

"That is because you are a woman whom no grief could permanently sadden," he said. "Beside, Genevieve, you have resources in yourself, which are not given to most women."

"Work is often one's best friend," said Genevieve. "He who loves art, who follows her with reverent, patient soul, has many toils and pains, but he has his rewards, too; the consolations, the satisfactions, the great, illuminated, unspeakable hours. No, Jack, I am not an unhappy woman."

"I see you are not. Is there another woman like you in the world? If there be, I am ready to go on a quest, long as Sir Galahad's, after her. The truth is, you have spoiled all other women for me, my Cousin Genevieve."

"Ah, Jack, you have praised me at the expense of all my sex, and I dare not even thank you. But, one of these days, when the true princess comes, you will think differently."

"I shall never think I was not wholly in earnest in what I said just now. Ah, Genevieve, why were you my cousin? Why was there a Royl Darrow in the world?" He spoke very gravely.

"If there were no whys of that sort, you forget, Jack, you dear, absurd fellow, all the dreadful birth-days on my side that would have waved you off."

"I beg your pardon. They would have done nothing of the sort. There are only four or five of them, at best. Do you suppose me such a poltroon as to mind those?"

"No, Jack; I must be honest with you there. But we are talking great nonsense."

"Are we? It has rather done me good to say what I have, and I see no possible harm, when, all the time, I know the sweetest woman in the world sitting here by my side is as remote to me as the stars; but I have said what was in me to say, and if you like, we will change the subject."

Before Genevieve could reply, Mrs. Fairfax came in to announce supper. She shared Genevieve's liking for their new guest.

Jack stayed two days longer at Grayledge. At the last he tore himself reluctantly away. Royl Darrow's name was not again broached between the cousins.

(Concluded in next number.)

The Home Circle.

LAY SERMON.

No. 4.

OUR GIRLS.

Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same and made them other five talents. And likewise he that had received two, he also gained other two. But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money.—Matt. xxv., 16-18.

THE application of this parable is very often lost, because men and women—especially women—in the majority, do not know that they are the unprofitable servants. They acknowledge that persons having talents should improve them, "every man according to his several ability;" but they do not realize that they are condemning themselves. But, so it is. Notice, that not they who had the greatest amount of responsibility, failed—it was he who had but one talent. History and observation tell us the same story. The highly-gifted do not—they dare not—deny their calling and take their ease. The poet, like a cloud, sometimes golden, sometimes leaden, draws from deeps and shallows all of refreshing that he can contain, and sends it forth gently to gladden, or strongly to combat. The painter, like a river, rushes onward in his career, creating blooming meadows, tall, dim woods, and crowded, smoky cities. The orator, like the wind breathing gently over beds of violets, frisking among tasseled corn-rows, sweeping through sighing pines and battling with the surging ocean, rules, as he speaks softly to the tender and innocent, flatteringly to the food-producer, denunciatively to the ancient and conservative, grandly, though scarce effectively, to the mighty waves of evil. The musician, like a fairy, through a senseless medium of wood and steel, draws from nature and art, and weakness and passion, and heart and brain, and hell and Heaven, a strange, sweet, mysterious language, like the cry of a wandering spirit, by the magic touch of his fingers. No. It is the little cloud that shrinks out of sight. It is the little stream that loses itself in the sand. It is the little breeze that sighs itself away. It is the little fairy of one chord that utters not that.

We need it impressed that those who have one talent should insure themselves against condemnation, not only because they are most likely to fail, but because there are more of them, and they come nearer to us. We want touching our everyday life at every

point, beauty, loveliness and means of advancement, even though, as a usual thing, of a quiet kind. Not always is our land thirsty for refreshing rains—always do the flowers in our little gardens need gentle dews. One river, for the enriching of a district, is enough—but many little brooks we require that our fields may be green. Sometimes only are oaks wrestled with and strengthened in their foothold, and old ruins swept away—often is wafted to us the perfume of a heliotrope or a shower of rose leaves. Not every day can we listen to glorious floods of harmony—every day do we need the simple chords to form the accompaniment to the quieter strains of our own little song.

Those especially who should heed this exhortation are growing girls. On them does the happiness of the world largely depend; and it is they who fail most, just here, though not always from lack of feeling their duty. But, in this, as in many other cases, the voice of society is on the wrong side. Let a girl say that she has a talent for housekeeping or teaching, and nothing more, all right—but let her say that she feels herself called to work for a college education, to lecture, to preach, to study art, law, music or medicine—and of the hundred who do, not five feel that they are geniuses—and immediately what opposition she meets. Friends laugh at the nonsensical idea, parents insist on their right to her services, pretty tales are told her of noble girls who sacrificed themselves and devoted their time to their families, ridicule and innuendo are used against unwomanly ambition that reaches beyond the home-circle, expressions of contempt of mediocrity, are heard on all sides, until under this flood-tide, the poor girl is overwhelmed. Outwardly, she is as desitute as though she were not intrusted with a talent; inwardly, she is far more so, because joined to the feeling of condemnation for not using it, is the certainty that, buried in its damp grave, it will rust, and that afterwards it will be taken from her, besides the despairing, even maddening longing to bring it out, brighten it, and defying opposition, being sure of her Master's approval, improve it. But, by ingenious quibbling to suit human selfishness, conscious or not, higher duties are shown her as hers, and she feels forced to accept them—though, in passing, I would like to ask how a long course of washing dirty faces and mending old clothes can be called a more elevated employment than the cultivation of an immortal mind? I am not saying that a woman having real duties to others

should ignore them in order to exercise her own mental powers—far from it. If the two must antagonize, the Lord, both of her talents and her duties, will gently take the former into His own keeping, until the latter have been accomplished. But I do say that no growing girl should have the duties of others pressed upon her; she was not meant to bear them, or she would have had the years, experience and strength necessary to do so sent with them. Oh, there is not in the world a sight more pitiable than that of a child-woman, having all the freshness of youth crushed out by the premature thrusting upon her of womanhood's cares, and losing the sweetness of womanhood, because they came not to her slowly and naturally, carrying in them their blessed rewards. We hear a great deal told of the responsibility of the oldest daughter of a large family. But there is no responsibility about it; it is accident and convenience. She is no more than any other daughter, except in seniority. The children are not hers; she is not accountable for them, and she is for herself. Parents are shirking their duty to her and the others if they add to her burdens. Not until she has done her full duty to herself, is she in a position to do very much for others. God will not ask her for any talents but her own. Shall she say that she was compelled to ignore His commands because her parents' commands were in opposition? I think He will pity her, and reward her according to the efforts she has made; but she cannot receive a full recompense.

The term heart is used to express the inner, the best life, derived from the office of the physical heart. And this, it might be well to note, making nutriment for the whole system, and distributing it throughout, takes first, through the coronary artery, its best and freshest for itself, and only by so doing can it have the necessary vigor to strengthen what depends upon it. Weak enough would it be if it gave away its best, and if it were nourished on its own after the most of the vitality had been extracted.

Mediocrity, as applied to faithful, conscientious effort, does not exist. If each does his best, he has attained perfection in his degree, and only this is required to make the world a paradise. Oh, let our girls shake off the tyranny of custom, prejudice and narrowness which have destroyed so much power for good, and come out, resolved to do their full duty, as they, not others, see it, determined to live down unkindness and opposition, and they will not fail. One of our young friends will soon find herself able to create a very pretty picture, which, though it may not take a medal at the exhibition, will more than fill the place of the outgrown chromo that used to hang over the piano. Another, though she may not be heard in the ball-room or concert-hall, will link together by her silvery chords the untrained voices of a Sunday-school, or delight by her sweet melodies a few dear friends in the parlor of an evening. Another, though her name be not Willard or Livermore, will gather her books and her pretty dresses together, and travel for a few weeks in the winter season, to reach for humanity, the hearts of girls like herself, over whose heads the words from older and wiser lips had gone. Another, though she may make no startling discoveries in medical science, by reforming the dress of her young friends, will impel towards a higher plane of physical life, or she may snatch from the jaws of death a tender babe in her own village.

And is this all? No, no. In the parable, they who improved their talents received, beside the actual reward, commendations both of God and man. It is the way of the world, as well as divine law set in operation by our own efforts, that "To him that hath

it shall be given." The same girl who, by the most careful time-serving for others, could gain no praise, finds that at the least success in her endeavors to elevate herself, those who were indifferent or opposed will come forward to help her, and rejoice in her complete triumph as though they had inaugurated it, and not tried to defeat it, and new friends will continue to gather round her, opening to her new sources of honor and happiness. No one in particular praised Addie's cakes, perfect though they were; but who has not praised her picture? Mamma stands before it, hour after hour; papa says: "Addie, I knew you were something besides a cook." Mrs. North and Mrs. South go their several ways to say that Miss Addie is a very bright young lady; and brother Bob's friend Harry thinks what a fine thing it would be if she were in his house to adorn it likewise, while all know that she can use other brushes and make other mixtures besides those used in painting. Uncle and aunt look proudly at "our niece," as they listen to Lillie's sweet voice, and little brothers among the "boys" take great pleasure in talking about "our Lillie that sings," though they could take equal pride, if they thought it worth while, in the dainty stitching and neat patches from the same fair fingers that often flash over ivory keys. Gertrude's younger sisters talk about "my sister" so fondly, that their schoolmates catch the infection, and write of her to their friends in distant cities; and so, wherever she appears, like a wall of defense around her, she finds a clique of sweet young girls. The old doctor who has watched over Mary's growth, continues to speak so kindly of his young rival, probably his successor—no, he has a son a physician—that the old families accord her far more consideration than ever she had in the little school-house, while through the love of the children she gains the confidence of the parents. So continually the pride relatives take in their girls, who are improving their talents, and the respect of the community for them and theirs, act and re-act on each other, binding friends and families more closely together, circling them round the inner sanctuaries of honored, appreciated, well-beloved homes, inspiring the more, as the time draws nearer, towards additional endeavor to merit, even though for one talent, the divine encomium, "Well done good and faithful servant."

MARGARET B. HARVEY.

ZAIDEE'S SACQUE.

HER back is always cold and chilly, and the backs of her arms; so I told her she must wear more clothing, that a warm, knit sacque with sleeves was just what she needed. We looked around to find out what was the cheapest, for Zaidee has to study economy. We could send to some of the large wholesale stores in New York and buy a very nice sacque with sleeves for two dollars and fifty cents, but the girl had not the money to spare. Mrs. Lombard, the milliner, would find the material and knit it for three dollars; but this plan suggested another outlay. A soft, flimsy, stretchy article could be bought at the stores, but it would soon wear out.

But the minister's wife happened to drop a little hint that was better than any one's suggestion, and she didn't know she was doing it, either. I was commending the fit of her baby's little knit sacque, and she said that garment had once been a tight, sleeveless jacket of her own when she was a school-girl, and she had crocheted it over twice, the last time for baby Winny. Now that was a new wrinkle,

just what I wanted to know, too. She said she raveled out her woven jacket, washed the yarn in strong soap-suds to full and puff it up, and make it as good as new, and made it over into a little sacque.

Acting on this new suggestion, we went to work, and to-day Zaidee is wearing her soft, warm, fleecy sacque; it fits so well, too, adapting itself to the pretty curves and slopes of her graceful, girlish figure. We are so pleased with it, Zaidee and I, because it is all our own handiwork, and cost just one dollar and twenty cents.

Now listen, girls. I want you to understand. I will make the directions just as plain as though I were talking to a lot of babies. I am very sure you will all be glad to know this, and then go to work and make sacques for yourselves, or your mothers, or grandmas, or somebody that you love and wish to make comfortable.

It required nearly six skeins of Germantown yarn, for which we pay, here at Millwood, twenty cents a skein. It was a shade lighter in color than seal brown. For the edge or border we took an old worn-out sacque, raveled it out and washed the yarn well, dipped it in alum-water for a mordant to set the color, and then dyed it three shades of red with Leamon's Aniline dye. The same dye did for all of them. One shade was very dark—the first one next the sacque—the next row a little lighter, and the outside row the brightest of all.

To get the right fit and size, cut a paper pattern over a sacque or basque, which can be laid on one's lap occasionally to measure by. Begin at the bottom and crochet up, narrow to make the arm-place and on the shoulder where the seam goes, one stitch at a time. You will know by the pattern where to widen and where to narrow. Do not follow the paper pattern closely. I think Zaidee must have knit two inches, or perhaps more, smaller than the pattern; it will give and stretch so as to fit the form. Only follow the pattern pretty closely on the edge that shows the curve under the arm, and the widening above and below, and the shape on the shoulder and about the neck. Zaidee's does not fit together at the throat, but buttons down below. The collar turns back—would be called a rolling-collar.

If you would wish it to be slashed behind, you would knit each part separate, as high up as you liked, and then knit clear across. The collar part should be knit wider than the rest of the border. After the back is knit you can put it in better shape, and make it rounding and longer behind, by knitting two or three rounds more; and you can add the finishing touches, here and there, with a few more stitches, to fill out any place that may be lacking a little.

Now, if you are making this jacket for a young lady, and want to have it very pretty, and piquant, and stylish, you can have a cord and tassels to tie behind and pretty little crocheted fixings in front to fasten it, and your fancy may suggest something nicer yet; but if for your aunt or your grandma, you will crochet a cover for buttons, or cover them with silk or velvet of the same shade as the border, and have it button snugly across the breast. Such a garment, with careful usage, will last until you are tired of it, and then it will do the same for the one to whom you give it.

Zaidee used her own judgment about the sleeves. The minister's wife made hers in two pieces, and sewed them together; but, for fear the seams would draw and give the sleeves an appearance of untidiness, Zaidee concluded to make hers all in one piece. She made allowance for the trimming about the wrist, and began and knit round and round, widening as the size required. Then, when she came to the upper end,

she stopped where the centre of the curve would come, and knit the rounding part that gives the sleeve the fit. That was very easily done, and we are all delighted with Zaidee's success.

One of my neighbors has been wearing a knit sleeveless jacket, but her arms are always cold, and the arm-places in the garment were so large that sleeves could not be fitted in. She raveled it out, and is making it over with sleeves in it. The yarn was easily matched, and the change can be effected and no time lost, for such work can be done in evenings and odd spells. She works with a good-sized ivory crochet needle, which is suitable for a round, honest yarn, like Germantown wool. Zaidee sewed the pieces together with the same kind of yarn, doubled, an over-and-over stitch, taking care not to draw the thread too tight.

There is quite an art in putting colors together, that beautify and harmonize with each other. Now, this brown wool needed those shadings of red in the trimming—first cardinal red, then crimson, then that glowing geranium tint. If trimmed with cord and tassels, one must use taste in the shades brought together. The eye is a very good judge in this case; it can generally be trusted.

When laying off a knit sacque, it should be folded lengthwise, with the seams straightened out smoothly, that it may not draw, or widen, or become shapeless. Care should be taken of all one's clothing when it is laid aside. There is no foe so detrimental to good wearing apparel as dust and creases. Any garment that is neglected, even for a few times, will betray the carelessness in a little while.

I hope I have made these directions plain. The sacque was knit in three pieces—the back and two fronts. Care must be exercised, or the two parts will be for the same side—one right side out, and the other wrong.

CHATTY BROOKS.

FROM MY CORNER.

No. 26.

'MIDST all the singing birds of spring,
Should I not lift my voice,
And spite of clouds and wintry gloom,
In brighter hours rejoice?

Upon ten thousand, thousand hills,
The sunlight shines to-day;
The earth is good—the Lord is good;
"Rejoice in Him alway."

The clouds but hide his face awhile,
That when away they roll,
A brighter, heavenlier light may beam
Upon the waiting soul.

"Light up your hearts." We lift them up—
While birds His praises sing—
And ask each day new trust, new strength,
For all that day may bring!

It was on one of the first warm sunny days of April, five years ago, that these thoughts formed themselves in my mind, and found expression in words. I was sitting on the long gallery, hung with honeysuckle vines, in and out of which the tiny brown sparrows were flying and chirping. There had been illness in the house—serious, alarming illness. Anxiety and care had weighed upon us, and now, that the weight was removed, our hearts could be lifted out of their sad state.

I had been reading the communion service, for it

was the day for its celebration in ten thousand thousand churches, and the words, "lift up your hearts," came back to me with such full, beautiful significance, taking a meaning they had never held for me before. Not only the "lifting up" to meet Him in the sanctuary, where He came to be present at the sacred feast, but the great *sursum corda* of nature, its whole heart stirred and lifted in glad rejoicing, as new life thrilled and throbbed through all its pulses.

I looked over the open fields, where the grass was springing and cattle were grazing, then on to the blue mountain tops, dim and hazy in the distance, yet with a golden glory resting on their summits. The sunlight sparkled and danced around me, the early spring flowers nodded their heads in the light breeze, and bird-songs filled my ear. Everything seemed to say, "Rejoice!" and my spirit was glad to obey the call.

Sitting on Lizzie's portico to-day, listening again to the birds singing in the sunshine, I thought of it all as it was that morning, and compared that time with this. The scene around me here is not so beautiful. I miss the fields and mountains, the bower of trees and vines that surrounded me there, and the free air of the hills. But there is a difference which more than makes up for any such change. The power to move about; the ability to enjoy more fully all this outer loveliness; to tread, if only for one minute, the grass of God's green earth; to sink my feet in the clover bed; to walk about alone amid the flowers, and stoop to pick some bud or fragrant leaf. Oh! surely none can fully appreciate the blessing of freedom of motion, the pleasure in just being allowed the privilege of walking about, save those who have been deprived of it for months and years. My constant prayer is that I may be thankful enough for it, and not take the boon with an ungrateful heart. The most of us have—or think we have—so many trials to bear, small or great, as the case may be, that often the common, every-day blessings of health, eyesight and hearing are taken as a matter of course, and hardly thought of or prized, because along with them are crosses to carry, privations to endure or secret thorns to wound our too easily wounded hearts. So we move along, almost unmindful of these inestimable gifts, until perhaps one of them is lost, and then we find how precious it was—how much we had that was good which we did not appreciate rightly. That is a beautiful prayer, and well worth remembering, which, after thanking our Father for these ordinary daily blessings, asks "that we may show forth our thankfulness, not only with our lips but in our lives."

The pot plants are enjoying the fresh air to-day almost as much as I. We have put them out on the portico that they may have the full benefit of it, and washed off the leaves of the geraniums and foliage plant, which have grown luxuriantly during the unusually warm winter. The heliotrope holds one bunch of fragrant purple bloom, and a creamy lily bud is slowly unfolding amid the dark, shining leaves. A friend gave me a double pink fish geranium not long ago, and it is bearing its first flowers—the loveliest geranium bloom I ever saw.

Last week I heard the description, from one who had seen it, of a wonderful garden, which must be almost a fairy-land. It belongs to a Georgia lady, who for thirty years has planned, superintended and helped with her own hands to make it what it is. In that mild climate, a succession of flowers can be secured throughout the year, and myriads of roses bloom for her during nearly all the months. Smaller flowers and shrubs border the white shell walks which gleam in every direction through the trees. Ever-

greens and exotics are dotted about on all sides. In one place, a huge live oak is hung with the gray southern moss, which droops its long funeral fringes to the ground, and close by an orange-tree blooms in bridal beauty. Broad magnolias spread their dark foliage over rustic seats formed of twisted vines. Bowers of jessamine and Lady Banks roses invite the visitor on a warm summer day. In one part of the grounds, box-wood and other evergreens have been trimmed and trained to simulate a suite of rooms. The parlor contains an imitation piano and chairs; the dining-room has a dining-table and sideboard; the kitchen a cooking-stove, all of box-wood. Cozy little nooks are arranged in odd, unexpected places, fit spots for a confidential *tête-à-tête*, or for a solitary book-lover to while away a quiet afternoon with some favorite author.

The whole place was described to me so graphically, that I could imagine much of its beauty. What a feast to eyes and heart would be the sight of it in reality. What a work it has been through the best part of a lifetime, for one who perhaps has neither husband or children on whom to spend her time and care. A pure, loving heart it should be, whose daily companionship is with the flowers. Must she not have learned many sweet lessons from these silent, lovely teachers, and derived comfort and cheer in many an hour from their gentle ministrations? I hope she makes many other hearts glad with them sometimes, and lets them help to brighten homes where sorrow or sickness have cast a gloom. If you, dear Earnest, and I, who love the flowers so dearly, could but walk in that earthly paradise, and have a right there, how much pleasure we could both give and gain.

LICHEN.

THE BARN'S HYMNS.

IT was a great doctor of divinity in Scotland who, as he lay on his last pillow, used often to ask them to sing for him "one of bairn's hymns." And he was not the first or last who has been cheered and comforted by them. Have you never, when wearied out and sore perplexed by many cares, heard a sweet voice ringing out cheerily, without a thought, probably, of the meaning, the sweet words:

"Oh, what peace we often forfeit,
Oh, what needless pain we bear,
All because we do not carry
Everything to God in prayer."

The words have come to you like an angel's whisper, soothing and calming your spirit, and pointing it to the only true source of rest.

Again, when little ones have been especially trying, and your spirit has grown hasty and impatient, how like oil upon the water has fallen the words, and some bright voice sings out:

"Jesus, gentle Saviour, hear my earnest prayer,
Make these little children all Thy constant care,
Softly shine upon us with Thy smile of love,
Lead us on our journey to Thy home above."

You cannot long be angry with the children with such thoughts brooding in your heart.

Cherish this song-gift tenderly in your little home circle, and it will do both you and the children good every day. There is nothing that can equal it for chasing away ill-humor and all kindred evil spirits. Teach the children to notice the sentiment of their hymns, and the words will often come home to them with precious lessons of heavenly cheering.

McC.

Evenings with the Poets.

THROUGH A WINDOW.

I LIE here at rest in my chamber,
And look through the window again,
With eyes that are changed since the old time,
And the sting of an exquisite pain.

'Tis not much that I see for a picture,
Through boughs that are green with spring—
A barn, with its roof gray and mossy,
And above it a bird on the wing;

Or, lifting my head a thought higher,
Some hills and a village I know,
And over it all the blue heaven,
With a white cloud floating below.

Ah! once the roof was a prison,
My mind and the sky were free,
My thoughts with the birds went flying,
And my hopes were a heaven to me.

Now I come from the limitless distance,
Where I followed my youth's wild will,
Where they press the wine of delusion
That you drink, and are thirsty still.

And I know why the bird with the spring-time
To the gnarled old tree comes back—
He has tried the south and the summer,
He has felt what the sweet things lack.

So I come with a sad contentment,
With eyes that are changed I see;
The roof means peace, not a prison,
And Heaven smiles down on me.

LOUISE CHANDLER MOUTLON.

PEACE.

ERE our dear Saviour spoke the parting word
To those who loved Him best when here below,
While deep emotion every bosom stirred,
He said My peace I give you ere I go.

His peace; sweet peace! As falls the summer dew
On drooping flowers, so fell those words of cheer
Upon the earnest hearts that dimly knew
What they, like their dear Lord, must suffer here.

His peace—Christ's peace! Oh, gift most rare and
strange!

Never was aught so precious given before!
Vain trifler he who would that gift exchange
For all the riches of Golconda's shore!

His peace—His blessed peace! Not joy, the bright,
Bewildering sprite that charmed their early years,
When, with youth's roses crowned, and clad in light,
Her radiant eyes had ne'er been dimmed by tears—

But peace, that walks with patience side by side,
Bearing Heaven's seal upon her pure, calm face;
Child of submission, whatso'er betide,
She wears the white robe of celestial grace.

O Christ! whose human heart remembers still
The pangs from which death only gave release;
Strange griefs, strange fears, our yearning souls must
fill,
Withhold what else Thou wilt—but give us peace.

JULIA C. R. DORR.

MY NATIVE LAND.

WE wander far o'er land and sea,
We seek the old and new,
We try the lowly and the great,
The many and the few;
O'er states at hand and realms remote,
With curious quest we roam,
But find the fairest spot on earth
Just in our native home.

We hold communion, high and sweet,
With men, in ancient lore;
By day, by night, with reverent eyes,
O'er volumes old we pore;
But Rome, and Greece, and Orient lands,
And heroes far away,
Great in their times, still lack the charm
That lights our own to-day.

We seek for landscapes, fair and grand,
Seen through sweet summer haze,
Helvetia's mountains, piled with snow,
Italia's sunset rays;
And lake, and stream, and crag, and dell,
And new and fairer flowers;
We own them rich, and fair; but not
More grand, more fair than ours.

With solemn air we tread where trod
The feet of ancient men,
And fill old palaces and courts
With echoing sounds again;
Temple and forum, bath and arch,
Unearthed, in glory stand,
These with admiring gaze we view,
But crave our native land.

We hear with joy the golden speech
Of men of high renown,
We see with praise the jeweled wealth
Of scepter, mace and crown;
But dearer far the golden words
That made a people free;
And crown and scepter pale before
A nation's liberty.

O land where saint and pilgrim came,
With loftiest purpose fraught,
Nurtured in hardship, toil and faith,
O land Divinely taught,
As streams the light from headland tower,
Guide o'er the stormy sea,
So hope, to all the oppressed, beams forth,
Dear native land, from thee.

REV. S. F. SMITH,
Author of "My Country 'tis of Thee."

TO THE POET IN WHITTIER.

FROM this far realm of Pines I waft thee now
A Brother's greeting, Poet, tried and true;
So thick the laurels on thy reverend brow
We scarce can see the white locks glimmering
through!

Oh, pure of thought! Earnest in heart as pen,
The tests of time have left thee undefiled;
And o'er the snows of three-score years and ten
Shines the unsullied aureole of a child.

PAUL H. HAYNE.

Housekeepers' Department.

MRS. GILBERT'S LUNCH.

"AUNT Mary," said Mrs. Gilbert, a bright little blonde of nineteen, "I am so glad you have come! You can help me so much."

"Why, what is the dilemma?" asked Aunt Mary, as she relinquished her gloves, bonnet and veil to her niece's eager hands, and settled herself in the large, old-fashioned arm-chair, temptingly placed in front of a little wood-fire that blazed and sparkled cheerfully on the well-swept hearth.

"Not a dilemma at all, auntie, to wise housekeepers like you, who could entertain the Shah of Persia and his suite at a moment's notice; but I have had so little experience, and George wants me to show some attention in a social way to Mrs. Pomeroy—and, well, auntie, you know George and I are not rich, and Mrs. Pomeroy lives so elegantly, that I am quite frightened at the thought of it."

"Silly child!" said Aunt Mary, with a benign look, that made the words sound very like a caress instead of a reproof. "I don't think Mrs. Pomeroy herself could have a more orderly or cleaner house than this little cottage. I see you know how to practice your dear mother's maxim about *keeping things neat*. That accomplishes far more than these violent house-cleanings and spring epidemics of scrubbing."

Nellie Gilbert smiled with great delight, and felt that she was fully compensated for her trouble by the approval of one whom she had so long regarded as a model of housekeepers.

"Have you decided what the entertainment shall be?" said Aunt Mary, returning with a keen interest to the subject, for she was one who did with her whole heart all work that her hand found to do. "Which would be most convenient for you and Katie—for, as you only keep one girl, you will have to think of her work, too—to have visitors in the morning or evening? A dinner is rather too elaborate for you to attempt yet, and it is a little stiff and formal, I think."

"Yes," said Nellie, shaking her pretty head decidedly, "that would never do; and yet I don't know about having an evening company, either. Mrs. Pomeroy would not care for dancing or music particularly, and I want her to be pleased, because her family have all been so kind to George. Besides, an evening company does upset the next day's work so!"

"Then," said Aunt Mary, laughing, "try a lunch. We can do a great deal before, and feel rested and bright when your guests arrive; and Mrs. Pomeroy used to belong to the ladies' committees and associations here, and will enjoy meeting her old friends."

"That is the very thing, auntie—a lunch would be charming, and you must help me to arrange the table."

"That will be easy, for you had so many lovely bridal gifts. You must have a crimson tablecloth in the first place, for that will brighten everything so; and then for the centre you must have flowers, of course. Have you an *épergne*?"

"No," said Nellie; "but there is my lovely pot of scarlet geraniums—they are almost dazzling—I could

put that in my *jardinière* vase, and add calla lilies and other flowers."

"Yes, that would be beautiful; and you have so many glass dishes in different shapes which you can fill with cut flowers and place at symmetrical distances."

"And my Venetian glasses, auntie! They would be ornamental themselves as well as the flowers, and would require so little space."

"Yes. Now, we will want all your prettiest china. Your set of majolica plates, with the gold shells and fruits on them, and your *bonbon* dishes in the shape of lilies."

"And here, auntie, only see these jelly dishes in the shape of Tyrolese peasant girls; and these dishes will do for fruits and fancy cakes."

"The table looks extremely pretty. Nellie, it will be best to have dishes that do not require carving. The conversation will flow more freely, and you can attend to your guests more perfectly. Have salads, game or shell-fish. Croquettes and *patés* are very nice, or any cold dessert-dishes."

"We must have them served in courses, I suppose."

"Oh, yes, of course," and Aunt Mary's eyes twinkled demurely at her own pun.

"I shall have raw oysters first, Aunt Mary, for I want to show Nannie's present—those dear little French oyster-plates, with the fine shells and the tiny cup in the centre for holding the lemon. Then I don't think Katie quite understands soups yet. You know she has only been with me three months."

"Very well; then mushrooms in crust, and afterwards lamb-chops and tomato-sauce. Then chickens, either croquettes, or fricasseed, or prepared with macaroni or rice."

"Oh, I have an idea—I shall boil the chickens, chop the meat fine and season it with salt and pepper, and put in alternate layers of slices of hard-boiled eggs and chicken in the large jelly-mould you gave me, and pour over it the water after it is well-boiled down and seasoned. By next day a jelly will have formed, especially if I put in a little soaked gelatine, and it will make such a pretty dish garnished with light-colored celery leaves."

"That is very nice. For the next course, George must furnish some game—snipes or quails on toast, or with bread-sauce and potatoes—Saratoga potatoes make a pretty garnish for game, and it is a convenient way to prepare them, as they will be nice five or six hours after you have cooked them, if kept in a warm, dry place."

"We will have chocolate with whipped cream. I know you like that, auntie; and for a salad, lettuce, crisp and tender, and a dressing made with vinegar, olive-oil, pepper, salt and a little onion scraped very fine, with slices of red and white radishes laid on it, and a garnish of rich, velvety nasturtium blossoms."

"I see you have an eye for color, Nellie," said Aunt Mary, approvingly, "and for desserts, ice-cream, or peaches and cream frozen, and jellies."

"And my own cakes, Aunt Mary—I can make them very nicely."

"Well, I think it will be a success," said Aunt Mary; "and if you can entertain visitors inexpensively, it would be well to do it quite often, for then Katie will get used to it, and will not be put out."

The lunch was a success, and Nellie Gilbert had the satisfaction some months after of being quoted even by Mrs. Pomeroy as an authority. If my readers would like to hear more about her experience afterwards in little breakfasts and teas, and when chance visitors dropped in unexpectedly, I will be glad to tell them.

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Neat and pretty dresses for young ladies and school-girls are made of the hair-striped summer silks that are now sold for from fifty cents to one dollar and twenty-five cents a yard. If two shades of blue are chosen, or two blue-gray stripes, or else plum-color, or, it may be, old gold and brown, they have a very nice effect when trimmed with solid-colored silk like the darker shade of the two stripes. For instance, for a blonde of sixteen has just been made a cheap silk of dark navy-blue alternating with pale blue stripes. The demi-trained skirt has a single pleating seven inches deep as a flounce; the pleats are an inch broad, and are bordered near the lower edge with a bias blue silk band an inch wide. The over-skirt has an apron made of two breadths of the silk passed straight across the figure like a scarf, and cut on the edge in leaf-points that are bound with solid blue; the back dra-

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[Prepared expressly for "ARTHUR'S HOME MAGAZINE," by E. BUTTERICK & CO.]

Ladies' and Children's Garments.



FIGURE NO. 1.—GIRLS' COSTUME.

FIGURE NO. 1.—This charming little costume is made of suit goods. The polonaise was cut by pattern No. 6197, which is in 7 sizes for girls from 3 to 9 years of age and costs 25 cents.

The skirt is six-gored and was cut by pattern No. 4354, which is in 8 sizes for girls from 2 to 9 years of age, while it costs 20 cents.

To make the costume for a girl of 7 years, $5\frac{1}{2}$ yards of goods 22 inches wide will be needed, the polonaise calling for $3\frac{1}{4}$ yards and the skirt for $2\frac{1}{2}$ yards. Of 48-inch-wide goods, 3 yards will suffice, the polonaise calling for $1\frac{1}{2}$ yard and the skirt for $1\frac{1}{2}$ yard.



6205

Front View.



FIGURE NO. 2.—CHILD'S COSTUME.

FIGURE NO. 2.—To make this very stylish little costume for a child of 5 years, 3 yards of goods 22 inches wide, or $1\frac{1}{2}$ yard 48 inches wide, will be required. The pattern is No. 6210 and is in 5 sizes for children from 2 to 6 years of age, and its price is 25 cents. The band, cuffs, pocket-lap and collar are faced with darker material, and a decoration of white braid and buttons is used upon the facing. The center of the skirt has a facing of dark goods, and on the facing are set two rows of buttons connected by crossed loops of cord. Silk or velvet is used for the purpose on suit goods or light cloth, with a charming effect.



6205

Back View.

GIRLS' COAT.

No. 6205.—Lady's-cloth, serge, camel's-hair or any suit goods will make up into a coat of this description very handsomely. The decoration may consist of cordings or bindings of velvet, silk or braid, or the edges may be simply machine-stitched after being turned up or faced on the under side. The pattern is in 8 sizes for girls from 2 to 9 years of age. To make the coat for a girl of 6 years, $3\frac{1}{4}$ yards of goods 22 inches wide, or $1\frac{1}{2}$ yard 48 inches wide, will be needed. Price of pattern, 25 cents.

LADIES' CUTAWAY BASQUE, WITH VEST.

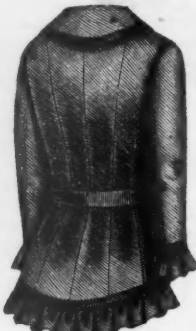
No. 6230.—To make this garment for a lady of medium size, $3\frac{1}{2}$ yards of goods 22 inches wide, together with $1\frac{1}{4}$ yard of a contrasting shade in the same width, will be required. Of 48-inch-wide goods, $1\frac{1}{4}$ yard of one shade and $\frac{1}{2}$ yard of another are necessary. The model costs 30 cents, and is in 13 sizes for ladies from 28 to 46 inches, bust measure.



6230

Front View.

6201

Front View.

6201

Back View.

6230

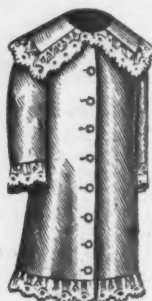
Back View

MISSES' HALF-FITTING, BELTED JACKET.

No. 6201.—This pattern is in 8 sizes for misses from 8 to 15 years of age. To make the garment for a miss of 13 years, $3\frac{1}{4}$ yards of goods 22 inches wide, or $1\frac{1}{4}$ yard 48 inches wide, will be needed. Price of pattern, 25 cents.



6207

Front View.

6218

Front View.

6218

Back View.

CHILD'S SACK.

No. 6218.—The pattern to this garment is in 6 sizes for children from 1 to 6 years of age, and costs 20 cents. To make the garment for a child of 3 years, 2 yards of goods 22 inches wide, or one yard 48 inches wide, will be needed.

LADIES' POLONAISE, WITH TRIPLE CAPE.

No. 6207.—For street wear wraps of some kind are a fashionable requirement, and the triple or Carrick cape meets the want without proving burdensome. This polonaise pattern is in 13 sizes for ladies from 28 to 46 inches, bust measure. To make the garment for a lady of medium size, $8\frac{1}{2}$ yards of goods 22 inches wide, or $4\frac{1}{2}$ yards 48 inches wide, will be needed. Price of pattern, 40 cents.

6207

Back View.

LADIES' OVER-SKIRT.

No. 6209.—A stylish over-skirt is here illustrated. The pattern is in 9 sizes for ladies from 20 to 36 inches, waist measure. To make the garment for a lady of medium size, $5\frac{1}{2}$ yards of goods 22 inches wide, or $2\frac{1}{2}$ yards 48 inches wide, will be required. Price of pattern, 30 cents.



6209

Front View.



6219

Front View.



6219

Back View.



6209

Back View.

CHILD'S COAT.

No. 6219.—This stylish little model is in 7 sizes for children from 2 to 8 years of age and costs 20 cents. To make the garment for a child of 4 years, 2 yards of goods 22 inches wide, or $1\frac{1}{2}$ yard 48 inches wide, will be required.



6223

Front View.



6197

Front View.



6197

Back View.

GIRLS' BELTED POLONAISE.

No. 6197.—The pattern to this pretty polonaise is in 7 sizes for girls from 3 to 9 years of age. The polonaise requires $3\frac{1}{4}$ yards of material 22 inches wide, or $1\frac{1}{2}$ yard 48 inches wide, in making it for a girl of 7 years. Price of pattern, 25 cents.

LADIES' POLONAISE.

No. 6223.—This polonaise is very distinguished in appearance, combining as it does the vest or *plastron* front, *revers* at the side, and a plaited back. The pattern is in 13 sizes for ladies from 28 to 46 inches, bust measure. To make the garment in the style represented for a lady of medium size, $11\frac{1}{2}$ yards of goods 22 inches wide, or $5\frac{1}{2}$ yards 48 inches wide, will be required. Price of pattern, 35 cents.



6223

Back View.

LADIES' EASY-FITTING BASQUE.

No. 6221.—The pattern to this garment is in 13 sizes for ladies from 28 to 46 inches, bust measure. To make the garment for a lady of medium size, 4 yards of goods 22-inches wide, or $1\frac{1}{4}$ yard 48 inches wide, will be required. The basque will be very satisfactory for warm weather wear made up of linen, lawn, muslin, cambric or any wash fabric and prettily trimmed, to wear in the house with any skirt a lady desires to put on. Or, it may be accompanied by an over-skirt of the same goods to complete a light over-dress to wear with a dark worsted, silk or cambric skirt. Price of pattern, 30 cents.



6221

Front View.



6214

Front View.



6214

Back View.



6221

Back View.

GIRLS' JACKET.

No. 6214.—The pattern to this pretty garment is in 7 sizes for girls from 3 to 9 years of age. It is available for light cloth or suitings, with any simple decoration the taste may prefer. To make the garment for a girl of 7 years, $2\frac{1}{4}$ yards of goods 22 inches wide, or $1\frac{1}{4}$ yard 48 inches wide, will be required. Price of pattern, 20 cents.



6203

Front View.



6200

Front View.



6200

Back View.

MISSSES' OVER-SKIRT.

No. 6200.—This over-skirt can be made of any suit material and trimmed in any tasteful manner. The pattern is in 8 sizes for misses from 8 to 15 years of age. It will require $3\frac{1}{4}$ yards of goods 22 inches wide, or $1\frac{1}{4}$ yard 48 inches wide, to make the over-skirt for a miss of 12 years. Price of pattern, 25 cents.



6203

Back View.

LADIES' OVER-SKIRT.

No. 6203.—To make the over-skirt illustrated for a lady of medium size, $6\frac{1}{4}$ yards of goods 22 inches wide, or $2\frac{1}{4}$ yards 48 inches wide, will be required. The pattern is in 9 sizes for ladies from 20 to 36 inches, waist measure, and its cost is 30 cents. The model is especially convenient for garments made of washable fabrics, as it can be let out smooth and plain for laundering with but little trouble.

NOTICE:—We are Agents for the Sale of E. BUTTERICK & CO.'S PATTERNS, and will send any kind or size of them to any address, postpaid, on receipt of price and order.

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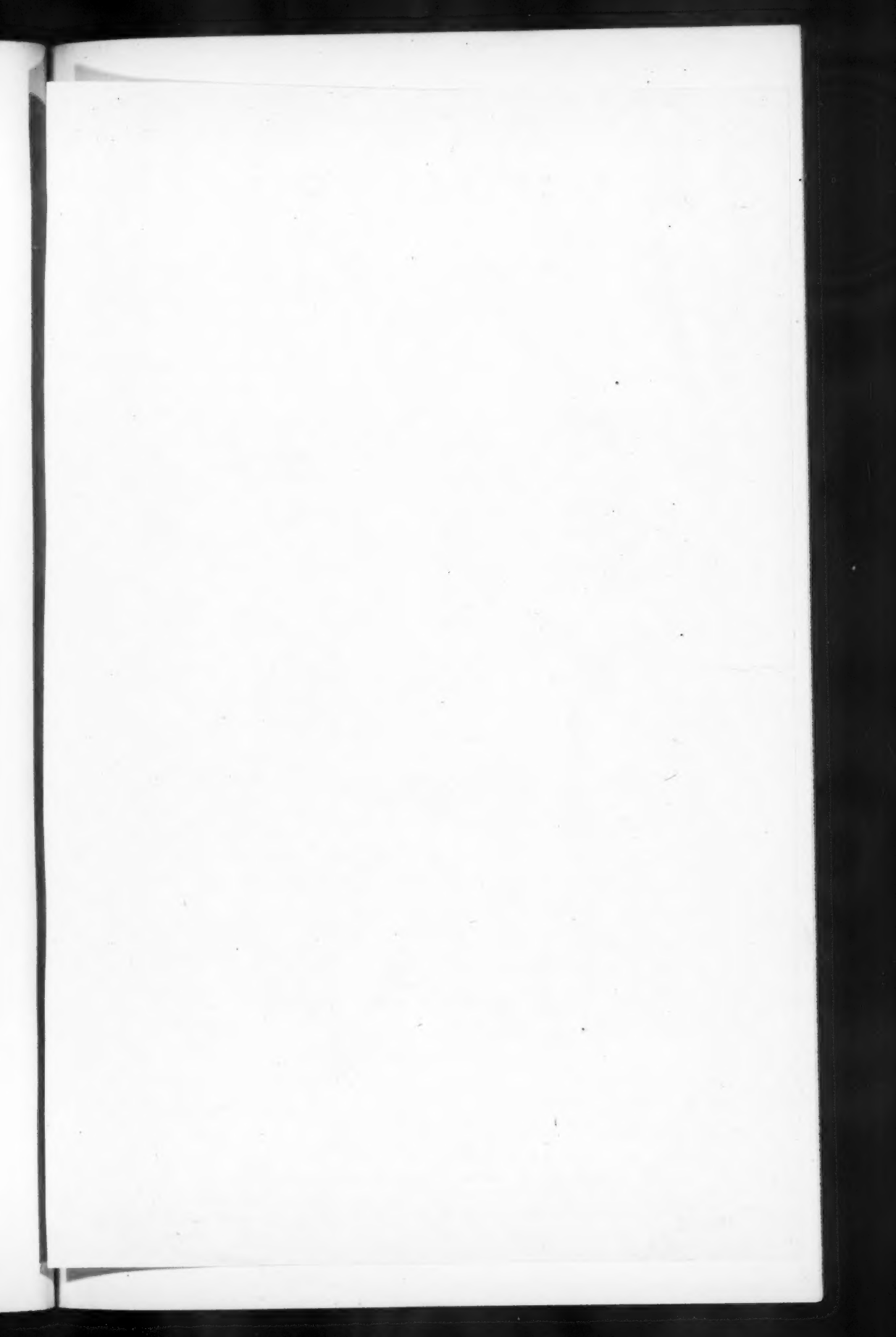
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LISTENING TO THE BIRDS.—Page 208.





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WELCOME TO SUMMER.—Page 113.